March 2002

NEA Today

The Magazine of the National Education Association

'No Child Left Behind'

It's the right goal. Will the new federal law help us get there?

see pages 8, 14, 20

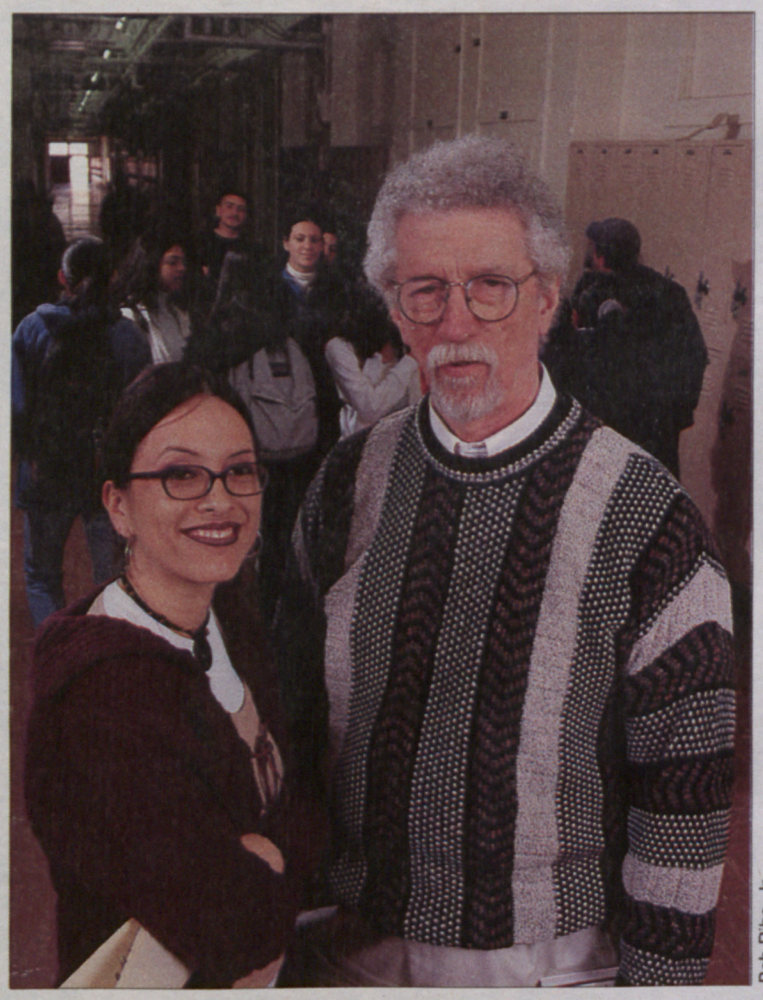
- Taxes, An Education issue, p. 18
- Should Schools Sell Junk Food? p. 21
- Getting Boys Hooked on Reading, p. 23
- NEA Olympians Nationwide, p. 34

NEA Today

March 2002

Volume 20 • Number 6

COVER STORY
page 8



Bob Riha, Jr.

No Child Left Behind

That's the name of the new federal education law—also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—that affects all NEA members, including Los Angeles educators Kristin Botello and Will Adams. Read on for an overview of the law (pages 14, 20) and how it will affect high-stakes testing (cover story, page 8) and certification (page 11).

Cover photo by Welton B. Dolby III

News

14
Congress passes sweeping new education law

15
Ten ways that NEA reshaped the education law

16
Washington state teachers win health care strike

17
Three hundred Wisconsin districts go without contracts

18
Taxation: It's an education issue

19
Tennessee sales tax just won't meet the bills

20
RIGHTS WATCH
ESEA and school prayer, parental rights, discipline, and more

NEA Today

Publisher
Kate Mattos

Editor
Bill Fischer

Manager, NEA Publications
Leona Hiraoka

Production Coordinator
Marsha Blackburn

Section Editors
Alain Jehlen, Kristen Loschert, Dave Winans

Advertising Coordinator
Sherida McGhee

Publisher Center Manager
Lorraine Buckland Wilson

Production
Kelly Cedeño, Deane Jenkins, Christian Lopez, Catherine Rawson

Contributing Writers
Anita Merina, Dina Spector Gómez Matt Simon

Editorial Interns
Urmila Subramanyam

Art Direction
Vanessa Sifford
Wickham & Associates, Inc.

NEA Today on the Web
www.nea.org/neatoday

NEA Today Local Editor Advisory Board
Harry Brennan, Old Bridge Education Association (New Jersey); Elizabeth Fourzan, Socorro Education Association (Texas); Don Mack, co-chair, Albany County Education Association (Wyoming); Bryan Massengale, Rhea-Dayton Education Association (Tennessee); Barbara Morris, co-chair, Colonial Paraprofessional Association (Delaware), Josef-Troi Orias, Hawaii State Teachers Association Student Program; John Sanchez, Covina Unified Education Association (California); Gail Swenson, Sioux Falls Education Association (South Dakota).

NEA Today (ISSN 0734-7219) is published eight times a year, monthly, in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, and May by the National Education Association, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to NEA Today, Attn: NEA Membership Records Address Change, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202/822-7065. **Members:** To change address, see Reader Services box to the right.

NEA Today is mailed to all NEA members as a benefit of membership. Nonmember subscription price: $45 institutional, $80 domestic and foreign. For members, subscriptions represent $4 of annual dues.

Advertising within *NEA Today* is screened, but the publishing of any advertisement does not imply NEA endorsement of the product or views expressed.

Learning

21
DEBATE
Should schools allow the sale of junk food?

23
INNOVATION
How to get boys hooked on reading

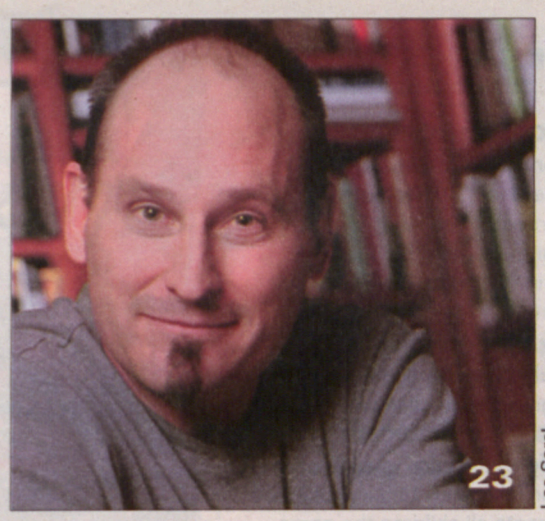
24
Teachers turn to Amnesty International to teach about human rights

25
DILEMMA
How do you get your early morning classes awake and working?

26
READING
Literacy program trains parents to read to their kids

28
ESP ON THE TEAM
Leading a campaign for a respectable living wage

31
TIPS FOR THE WIRED CLASSROOM
Keeping students from wandering on the Web during class



Leo Sorel

DEPARTMENTS

4
Letters

5
President's Viewpoint

7
My Turn
The death of his son takes one professor back to his students—and away from traditional assessment

11
Inside Scoop
ESEA's new requirements for teachers and Title I paraprofessionals

33
Health and Fitness
Living and working with asthma

34
People
A look at NEA Olympians

37
Money

40
Book Review

Take Note

SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

New qualifications, new ground rules for Title I paras
pg 11

Meet an education interpreter for hearing-impaired students
pg 29

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Challenging advanced students without frustrating those who are struggling
pg 24

Use of the drug Ecstasy on the rise
pg 32

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

Leading math educator speaks on closing the achievement gap
pg 22

A Web site on the classics
pg 45

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Getting free stuff from magazines and other sources
pg 37

Neuroscience for kids
pg 45

SPECIAL INTEREST

Becoming a cyberlobbyist for public education
pg 23

Why aren't there more minority teachers?
pg 40

Christopher Tomlin

NEA at a Glance

NEA President
Bob Chase

NEA Vice President
Reg Weaver

NEA Secretary Treasurer
Dennis Van Roekel

NEA Executive Director
John Wilson

NEA Executive Committee
Bob Chase, *Connecticut*
Mike Billirakis, *Ohio*
Lily Eskelsen, *Utah*
Iona Holloway, *Louisiana*
Michael Marks, *Mississippi*
Becky Pringle, *Pennsylvania*
Dennis Van Roekel, *Arizona*
Dan Sakota, *Idaho*
Reg Weaver, *Illinois*

Need to change your address?
Please send your address to the NEA Membership Records Office:
By mail: NEA Membership Records, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036
By fax: 202/822-7669
On the Web: www.nea.org/neatoday

Have an idea to share with the editorial staff?
By mail: NEA Today, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036
By E-mail: neatoday@nea.org
By fax: 202/822-7206

Letters

DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

I am now a Title I teacher, but keenly remember what it was like to have students in the classroom who were chronically disruptive (Debate, January).

One of them qualified for state placement in a special program, but because there wasn't any space for him in such a program, he was kept in my classroom. After our class suffered through his behavior for about four months, he finally was transferred to another classroom.

When the receiving teacher found out that this child was entitled to a special program but was not enrolled in one, that teacher threatened to sue the district on the student's behalf. In no time the student was transferred to a neighboring district and placed in a special program.

The key to removing such a student is to emphasize that it is best for the child. One must stress that the child's needs cannot be met in the regular classroom.

Mary Jo Straub
Edina, Minnesota

In my brief career as a teacher I also have realized the amount of attention *good* students miss out on because disruptive students take it all.

I agree that these disruptive students need to be placed in separate classes. The argument that these students have a disability is a good one. However, I wasn't trained, nor is my school system training me, to help them. Therefore, I can't give them the proper education they deserve.

The most important point is that good students have been neglected for years. When will it be time for them to receive their proper education? When do we work on challenging the good students, not "dumbing down" so the "special children" don't feel out of place?

If I were a parent of a regular or gifted child, I would be complaining to teachers and administration to find out what they are doing to improve my child's education. If there was a child in my child's class who was taking away from his or her education, I would be very upset and want to know what would be done to fix the situation.

I'm not saying that these special children should be forgotten. That is the last thing I want to happen. I think they should be placed with a teacher who is trained to help them succeed. Hopefully the child will learn to control, fix, and/or understand his or her situation.

Bill Kryscynski
Hamilton, Indiana

At the beginning of the semester I asked that a continuously disruptive student be removed from my classroom. I had followed my usually successful methods, which included conferences in the hallway, phone calls home, and discussions with administrators and counselors. I consulted with other more veteran teachers, and they were having similar problems with the same student.

The disruptions advanced to the destruction of classroom displays of students' work. Eventually, this student hit me in the head in front of the entire class. When I "wrote him up," the administration took no action against him, even though the student handbook required a five-day suspension.

This would have been my fourth year of teaching in this building, and I always had support in the past. The new administration chose to ignore my pleas for help with this student and warnings of his potential violent nature. This administration even told me that they couldn't handle this student either. What did they expect me to do with 35 other students in this class and one totally out of control student?

So, my answer to your question, "Should teachers have the authority to remove disruptive students from their classes permanently?" is an emphatic "yes!"

Carol Bone
Ypsilanti, Michigan

ZERO TOLERANCE

In response to the debate on zero tolerance, I think that we have to first address what fairness means (Debate, February). If one child in your class needs special help in a subject, you give it to him or her. Fairness is not about giving every child the same thing; it is about giving each child what he or she needs.

Therefore, the zero tolerance policy is an inherently unfair procedure in that it treats all children the same. Worse than that, zero tolerance policies overshadow prevention programs, leading administration to focus only on reacting with standardized responses.

We need proactive, individualized programs. We can still be "tough" without punishing every child in the same way. I am not saying that students should not be held accountable for their actions—they should. However, zero tolerance policies provide a quick fix instead of a planned, thoughtful intervention program. Long-term planning and effective interventions may be tougher to implement, but they are what will truly make a difference in children's lives through and beyond school.

Andrea Light
State College, Pennsylvania

Amy Ning

It seems to me that "zero tolerance" is more of the same simplistic responses to a myriad of not-so-simple problems. "Zero tolerance" is just that, "*no* tolerance." "No tolerance" is the extreme of "*intolerance*." Is that what we are trying to teach our students?

Holding students to reasonable and high standards for behavior does not mean being intolerant of mitigating circumstances and reasonable differences in judgment and perception of situations. Justice, fairness, mercy, and personal responsibility need not be mutually exclusive.

Michael Carrubba, Jr.
North Granby, Connecticut

In his opposition to "zero tolerance" disciplinary policies, Richard Ehret Sr. stated: "But under zero tolerance, if you violate a policy, you are out. How is anyone supposed to get a fair hearing in such a case?" The fairness lies in the fact that a specified, prescribed act will bring the same consequence, regardless of gender, age, race, political leanings, religion, socioeconomic class, or other classifications.

There's a legal term for the concept: "strict liability." The doctrine of strict liability says that there are some acts that are dangerous enough, harmful enough, or costly enough that if one undertakes them, he or she accepts full liability for the consequences. The fairness in the policy is two-fold. First, it asks only one question: Did the student do it? Second, if the answer to the above question is "yes," then the consequence is the same for all who commit that act. If it's not, the problem is not in the rule, but in its faulty application by an administrator not acting in good faith.

Greg Grant
Dublin, California

CREATIVE WRITING

As a licensed English teacher, I believe using writing projects as punishment for wrongdoing is, in itself, a wrongdoing (Dilemma, October). Creative writing should be encouraged as a positive outlet for young people's mental and emotional growths, and not treated as a compositional slap on the hand. I have seen some of the poorly written papers students submit to professors of college-level courses. Negative attitudes and bad memories about formal writing are, in my opinion, at the core of these substandard writing skills.

Candis Wiste
Caledonia, Minnesota

HIGH SCHOOL HOPE

Four stars for Alain Jehlen's article "Recipe for a Great School" (February cover story). The Wyandotte High School story gives us a sense of hope. It's reassuring to read that it is possible to make things better. Every struggling, frustrated teacher who has listened to the reform gurus and outside experts longs for the opportunity to see progress in his individual school. This article makes it seem possible. We no longer have to feel defeated and believe that nothing can be done to fix what is wrong.

The final touch, which suggests that teachers and staff are growing flowers in the courtyard, is a perfect metaphor for the piece. They also are nurturing flowers in the classroom, and we can vicariously celebrate their success.

Bill Harshbarger
Arcola, Illinois

SOCIAL SECURITY

I was very happy to see the article on the Social Security pension offset in the February issue ("Retiring on Next to Nothing"). I have been trying to get school district employees in Nevada aware of this for some time now because so many educators come from other states to work here and expect Social Security will be part of their retirement profile. Please continue to have updates on this very important issue for us.

Nancy Poniewaz
Las Vegas, Nevada

I was pleased to read the article about the work being done to get Congress to repeal the two offset provisions. In 1992 I sent a petition

with 3,000 signatures to then chairman of the House Ways and Means committee, Bill Archer. Former Congressman Archer is now retired and receives his *full* congressional salary as a pension. Apparently, in his opinion, this is not fiscally unsound, as his letter implied he felt the repeal would be.

Barbara Phillips
Shenandoah, Texas

SPORTS TRY-OUTS

I realize most sports have space limitations when it comes to cutting students, but as a cross-country and track coach I witness firsthand the character development and physical and emotional gains athletes experience in non-cut sports such as swimming and diving (Dilemma, November).

The lack of bench time is unique to these sports. The proverbial "pine" is not a reality. Instead, everyone gets a chance to practice and compete. As a result, the camaraderie between athletes is different because athletes are not left on the side wondering what it is like to compete. They truly share in the experience.

I hope you will consider such a story to help promote an increased participation in these sports. The data is clear that athletics can have a positive effect on students. Non-cut sports can fill a gap for athletes cut from other sports and offer opportunities for students who want try something without worrying about not being able to participate.

Walter Gorski
El Cerrito, California

LEANING TO THE LEFT

As a current events teacher, I strive to teach my students to detect subtle (and not-so-subtle) bias in news reporting. The left-leaning tilt of *NEA Today* provides good examples for the classroom, such as the January article "Pro-Education Governors Elected."

While the article mentions that the NEA supported several Republican candidates, it attempts to demonize unfavorable Republicans as "conservative" or "strongly conservative." Does *NEA Today* ever characterize its so-called "pro-education" Democrat friends as "liberal" or "strongly liberal?" I have yet to read that.

As a moderately conservative Republican member of the NEA, I find this consistent leftward tilt amusing at best and infuriating at worst.

Ken Koncerak
California, Pennsylvania

LEAVING TEACHING

As I read the February edition, I could not help but relate to the remarks made by both Karen Hertz (Letters) and Bob Chase (President's Viewpoint). I work in a school with a high rate of poverty. We feel the pressure of low test scores, and we worry about our students advancing in a world that is so demanding.

We are receiving additional training to help us understand poverty and find ways to help our students succeed. Even as we take these extra steps and spend these extra hours training and preparing, we can't help but have a strong feeling that it is not only the staff who should be responsible for these students' education. Shouldn't the parents and students be putting in the extra time and effort?

Congress has decided that teachers need to be held accountable. What about the students? Shouldn't they have the motivation to do the best that they can do?

My parents held me accountable for my grades until I was old enough to hold myself accountable. This does not appear to be the trend today. Is education so unimportant to parents that their children are placing the same value on it? Right now, in my area, I feel that is true.

I propose that Congress hold students responsible for their test scores. I am not saying that teachers should not be held responsible, but I do think that it should be a partnership.

If the students are motivated to do their best on a standard achievement test, then they will be more invested and try harder. The teachers are working very hard to teach the materials and meet all of the state standards to prepare students for the tests. However, if students take the tests and don't see the value, then many times they do not try their hardest.

If teachers get this type of support, maybe we will feel less stress and less of a desire to give up on our dreams of teaching. Maybe we will be able to keep the experienced teachers teaching instead of jumping from a sinking ship. Maybe we will be more successful with our future generations. Maybe our students will be responsible learners.

Brenda Powers
Alton, Illinois

Let's Talk

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of five ways:

- By mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036
- Through the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday and click on "Submit a Letter to the Editor"
- By E-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org
- By Fax: 202/822-7206
- By Phone: 202/822-7201

Letters are edited for length and clarity.

President's Viewpoint

BY BOB CHASE

Read Across–and For–America

People who cannot read by themselves are less able to think for themselves.

In the mid-19th century, the great poet Emily Dickinson penned a short paean to reading:

There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away
Nor any Coursers like a Page
Of prancing Poetry –
This Travers may the poorest take
Without oppress of Toll –
How frugal is the Chariot
That bears the Human soul.

One hundred years later, another famous poet, Dr. Theodor Geisel, said essentially the same thing: "Oh," he wrote, "the Places You'll Go!"

No matter their literary style, both Dickinson and Dr. Seuss had a burning desire to communicate the joy of reading. It is this same desire that compels NEA to sponsor—for the fifth year in a row—Read Across America, our annual "get out the book" campaign designed to inspire adults to spend time reading to children.

Unlike past years, NEA's Read Across America 2002 will officially take place on Friday, March 1, instead of on Dr. Seuss' actual birthday, which this year falls on a weekend. Music legend Garth Brooks will be the event's honorary chairman.

We know firsthand that children who are read to at home have a higher success rate at school.

This year NEA's Read Across America carries particular global and political significance as well.

Its spirit is the same: We want to encourage adults to foster a love of reading among children. We know firsthand that children who are read to at home have a higher success rate at school. The U.S. Department of Education has found that the more that students read for fun, the higher their reading scores. Conversely, we know that children who are not read to at home stand to fall behind not only in school, but in life.

Yet, given all that has occurred in the world since September 11, it's incumbent upon us, as educators, to emphasize the broader, crucial, national importance of literacy.

For literacy is not only about the fun of reading to a five-year-old. It is not only about the places children can go without leaving their sofas. Ultimately, literacy is about preserving democracy and freedom. It is the vital cornerstone of America.

When people cannot read by themselves, they are less able to think for themselves. This makes them more susceptible to rumors, demagogues, propaganda, superstition, exploitation, and extremism.

It is perhaps no coincidence that Afghanistan has the second-highest illiteracy rate in the world. According to UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 48 percent of Afghan men and 78 percent of Afghan women are illiterate.

But illiteracy is hardly limited to poor nations. Experts estimate that approximately 11 percent of Americans are, by UNESCO's definition, illiterate as well. If we are going to continue to flourish as a free and democratic society, we must ensure that every child, and adult, is visited regularly by the Cat in the Hat.

America, and free people everywhere, simply cannot prevail without literacy. 'Tis the "chariot that bears the human soul," indeed.

Comments? E-mail Bob Chase at BobChase@nea.org.

NEW LOWEST RATE FOR MEMBERS!

The lowest rate available.

0% INTRODUCTORY APR†

What a great way to start paying off your high-interest accounts!

Now the NEA *Platinum Plus*℠ MasterCard® offers you a **0% Introductory Annual Percentage Rate (APR) –** so you pay no interest on all cash advances for the first six months.†

As an NEA member, there's also **no annual fee** and you'll have access to the highest credit line available anywhere.

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

PLATINUM PLUS
the new standard

Plus, you'll enjoy such exclusive benefits as:

- Automatic MasterPurchase® Protection covers purchases against theft and damage, and extends eligible warranties
- Year-end summary of charges
- $1 million worth of Common Carrier Travel Accident Insurance‡

And remember: you can always carry more than one MasterCard® credit card.

So don't delay. Call today to take advantage of all the savings and benefits of the NEA *Platinum Plus* Credit Card. Because at this rate, you'll want to consolidate your high-interest balances right away!

Call: **1-888-758-7946**, priority code W9W3.

†Annual fee for the NEA *Platinum Plus* and NEA School Days credit cards: None. The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for purchases and cash advances is 13.99% for the NEA *Platinum Plus* card or 16.99% for the NEA School Days card. The current promotional APR offer for all cash advance transactions (including balance transfers) made with either account is 0% through your first six statement closing dates. When your minimum monthly payment is late (that is, not received by 2 p.m. on its Payment Due Date), or when the promotional offer expires, the APR that will be applied to all new and outstanding cash advance balances will be: 13.99% for the NEA *Platinum Plus* card or 16.99% for the NEA School Days card. Should your payment be late, the non-promotional APR for your account will be applied to all new and outstanding cash advance balances as of the first day of the next billing cycle. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM cash advances; credit card cash advance checks and balance transfers is 2% of each cash advance ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, person-to-person money transfers, money orders, bets, lottery tickets and casino gaming chips is 2% of each such purchase ($2 minimum, $30 maximum). The non-promotional APR for your account is not guaranteed and is subject to change. **MBNA will allocate your payments to balances (including new transactions) with a 0% APR before balances with higher APRs.** Balance transfers and/or cash advances of any kind may not be used to pay off or pay down any other MBNA account.

‡Certain restrictions apply to each benefit, as described in the benefits brochures which are sent soon after your account is opened. NEA School Days Card Customer benefits differ from those available with the NEA *Platinum Plus* account, i.e., benefit coverage amounts are less. NEA School Days Card credit lines run from $500 to $5,000, while NEA *Platinum Plus* credit lines are from $5,500 to $100,000.

The NEA is not involved in the credit decision process; standard credit procedure is followed. All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America.

Absolutely NO membership dues are used to market this program.

MBNA America Bank, N.A. is the exclusive issuer and administrator of the *Platinum Plus* credit card program.

The NEA Credit Card Program® has been developed for NEA members and their families only. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates, fees and special promotions offered through the NEA Credit Card Program. If eligible, a replacement card will be offered. Any account opened in response to this offer will be governed by the laws of Delaware.

The information about the costs of the card described in this application was accurate as of 1/2002. The information may have changed after that date. To find out what may have changed, please call (888) 758-7946. TTY users please call (800) 833-6262.

MBNA, MBNA America and *Platinum Plus* are service marks of MBNA America Bank, N.A. MasterCard® and MasterPurchase® are federally registered service marks of MasterCard International Inc., and are used pursuant to license.

The NEA Member Benefits logo is a federally registered service mark of NEA's Member Benefits Corporation, and is used by MBNA pursuant to license.

©2002 MBNA America Bank, N.A.

CCNT0302

'Teaching and Learning Are Personal'

The death of his son took this professor back to his students—and away from traditional assessments.

BY MATTHEW MILTICH

During the spring quarter of 1996, immediately after the death of my son Andrew, I found that when I was alone in my office on campus or at home, I could not read student papers from my learners at Itasca Community College, where I teach English.

I couldn't focus, couldn't concentrate my thoughts upon my learners' words on paper, or even make myself believe in the importance of grades or other prescriptive measures of their learning.

Sometimes, my vision blurred by grief, I couldn't even see the words my students had written. I could, however, see the students. Each one of them seemed to me as dear as my own child, so I had no trouble being with them, or reading their work and talking with them about their reading and other school work when they were with me.

In my composition classes, I worked with one person at a time offering individual help with writing.

I abandoned written examinations and instead questioned each learner individually. Each examination became a private conversation and each conscientious learner told me more about her or his learning than I'd ever discovered in written exams.

My experiences that quarter taught me more deeply the lesson I'd been learning one class day at a time for more than 20 years: Teaching and learning are personal, individual, and unique—and also inseparable from who we are and from our lives away from the classroom.

Years have passed since the death of my boy, and I can read student writing again and grade exams, both of which I consider honorable activities. But my conviction has deepened that every experience of learning, like each learner, is singular. I've concluded that for me and my learners, standard measurements of learning are inadequate.

Now, I find myself in direct conflict with the "assessment" movement in education. I disagree with the assumptions of this movement, and I'm suspicious of its advocates.

I disagree that assessment should assume a priority role in education. The evangelists in the movement offer it as a kind of panacea. I see it as a distraction that diverts our attention from more critical, more primary issues.

We must provide for our learners. Measurement is no substitute for nourishment. Advocates for assessment like to talk about nurturing students and about learning communities, but they end by focusing on measurement, data gathering, and quantification. Moreover, assessment programs absorb resources that otherwise might provide students with truly enriched and enriching learning experiences.

Larry Ryan

Matthew Miltich says he discerns more about his students' learning through individual conversations than through written exams.

Students need good instruction and good instructors. The assessment movement promises to improve instruction; but assessment has failed to capture the imagination of most teachers because the promise of improved instruction can't come true if assessment is the means for making it happen. Instruction will improve when administrators make careers in education more attractive and provide better support and greater access to professional development.

The assessment movement has promised to make us more accountable by providing tools for reporting measurable outcomes—a way to prove our worth and to hold us responsible for the learning of our students. Standardized tests, charts, scoring grids, rubrics, and assessment tools are promoted as the means by which we can quantify and report this learning.

What this promise fails to account for is that, for good or ill, no matter how well we teach, learning rests finally with the learner—and this is as it should be.

No more important moment comes for a learner than that in which she is struck, forcefully and clearly, by the notion that she and only she is responsible for her learning. No quantification can account for this revelation, but learners know when it occurs, and afterward they value worthy instructors as guides and allies in their learning experiences. Such an immeasurable outcome is worth more than any portfolio of objective data.

While objective evaluation of learning is important, learning can go on without it. No "assessment program" can take the place of energized, passionate faculty who love their disciplines and their learners and learning itself. ✔

Matthew Miltich teaches English at Itasca Community College, near Grand Rapids, Minnesota, and is a member of the Minnesota State College Faculty. A more extensive version of this article, titled "All the Fish in the River: An Essay on Assessment," appears in the winter 2001-02 issue of Thought and Action, *the NEA higher education journal, online at www.nea.org/he/tanda.html.*

Our debate column has always been one of the best read of all *NEA Today* features. It's also one of the longest running, dating back to the very first *NEA Today* published nearly 20 years ago. The first question debated was this: Must every student become computer literate? Taking the "yes" side was, naturally enough, a computer curriculum specialist from Illinois. On the opposing side was a San Francisco teacher who supervises student teachers.

Bill Fischer
editor

We find many of our debaters at the NEA Represetative Assembly, held each summer in a different city. Debaters must be able to write and willing to take a stand on controversial issues.

And they can't have thin skins, because their positions may set off a wave of negative reactions from readers.

I don't have any definite numbers about which debates out of the 150 or so that we've printed have drawn the most mail, but those that deal with real-life, day-to-day issues rather than policy-type questions always draw the most reader comments.

Twice in our history, we've run pro and con on whether schools should teach values, and both times, we've received a flood of reader comments.

Our most recent debate on whether teachers should be able to expel disruptive students seems to have struck a nerve. What teacher hasn't been confronted with this situation? As a result, readers responded in large numbers to this debate question, as you'll see by the representative sampling of letters on pages 4 and 5.

In education, yesterday's issues can come back anew today. Years ago, we didn't have a mechanism for you to register your opinion. Now we do so, be sure to vote. Just go to www.nea.org/neatoday and see the debate topic. Register your opinon and find out instantly how the running tally stacks up.

Bill Fischer

Put To the Test

New federal mandates on testing are in place. What will happen now? These schools may offer a preview.

Joan Sheehan

Ginny Evans works with students in her English as a Second Language class.

In Texas...

At test time each year, Ginny Evans knows the stakes tied to her students' scores: If they don't pass the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS), they don't graduate. For Evans' students at Hebron High School, that threat looms large, because as students still learning English they lack the language skills needed to understand and pass the test.

"We're always concerned about our ESL population," Evans says. "Language is a barrier."

Evans isn't the only one concerned about students with limited English skills. Under the No Child Left Behind Act passed in January (also known as the new Elementary and Secondary Education Act), schools are now accountable for the performance of students in defined subgroups, including students with limited English skills, economically disadvantaged students, migrant students, and minority students. "Performance" is determined by annual tests.

States must establish performance goals and report test scores for these subgroups, and they face sanctions if individual groups do not improve.

The goal: Close the achievement gap between poor and minority students and their affluent and/or nonminority peers.

Texas schools have already had to account for their African-American, Hispanic, Caucasian, economically disadvantaged, and special education students. Low performances by these groups impact a school's overall rating, which determines whether the school receives sanctions. (The state does not require separate reports for other minority groups and English-language learners.)

When schools use test scores for diagnostic purposes the system works fine, says Kristin Malone, an English teacher at Memorial High School in Spring Branch. The tests show whether students are learning and how teachers can better serve them, she says.

"I think it gives a teacher a fair chance at trying to do an academic intervention," Malone says. "It provides a focus so we are not just guessing at the problems."

Separating student scores also helps educators monitor the needs of each student population, Evans says.

"If we see a higher percentage of students who are not successful, we will regroup and see what is working or what isn't working," Evans says. "The breakdown of scores helps us see if there is a breakdown in instruction."

But the system breaks down when scores become ammunition to judge schools.

"The assessment is just a snapshot," Malone says. "It's a day when the kids take a test and that day is the only day being measured. It does not include everything else those kids do not do on paper."

While it's reasonable to analyze student scores by subgroups, the new ESEA does not look at the meaning behind those scores, says Walt Haney, a Boston College education professor. The ESEA simply ties school accountability to the progress of low-performing students.

Consequently, schools may find ways to exclude their low performers from the testing cycle, instead of meeting their educational needs, Haney says. Schools could manipulate test scores by reclassifying students into exempt groups, retaining them in grades, or encouraging them to leave school, he says.

Malone at Memorial High School believes schools remain accountable for all students.

"We're not shoving the undesirables under the carpet," she says. "If anything, we have created centers where we can help them succeed."

Overall, Malone and Evans believe the Texas system serves their students. And they expect the new ESEA will meet the needs of students in other states.

"It's a good system," Malone says. "Even though we have a diverse population, we approach the TAAS with unified goals. So even if you are in an affluent community or one of the Title I communities, you have the same expectations." ✔

—Kristen Loschert

Testing Timeline

NOW

Under the old law, each state was to define "proficient" in reading and math, and test students in grades 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12. Most state testing programs are not yet federally approved.

September 2002

Using a federal formula applied to 2001-02 test results, each state calculates a target percentage of "proficient" students. Schools must aim to meet this target for all students and for each subgroup of students. More than a fifth of schools will start out below the target.

2002-03

All schools and all major groups of students within each school are to make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) to reach target in two years.

2004-05

States raise the target percentage of "proficient" students. Schools that have not made AYP for two years get extra help. Also, they must offer students a choice of other public schools.*

2005-06

Annual testing in reading and math begins in each of grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 10-12. Schools that have not made AYP for three years must offer private tutoring.*

**Under the old law, 9,500 schools have received needs improvement ratings for two or more years. For these schools, sanctions start next September.*

In California...

Roosevelt High School in Los Angeles has just a few months to show test score improvement—even though everyone knows changes like this will take years.

"The train is rolling—and we're trying to fix the wheel," says English teacher Kristin Botello.

The story of Roosevelt High is a cautionary tale of what could happen at thousands of other low-income schools if the new federal education law is carried out in a way that delivers more punishment than help.

The No Child Left Behind Act mandates that schools will be judged by test scores. Those that don't make "adequate progress" toward the goal of 100 percent proficient students will suffer escalating sanctions that could end in wholesale staff changes.

But the new law also promises help, and many crucial details have yet to be worked out. That means educators will have to be visible, making the case for real reform.

At Roosevelt, promises of help have been made, broken, and made again. And it's a school in need of promises kept.

It's the biggest school in Los Angeles and one of the largest in the nation, with more than 5,000 students in a 1923 building surrounded by more than 40 "temporary" classrooms erected to house its bulging population. The students are overwhelmingly low-income and Latino. About 35 percent don't speak English fluently. And the average student at Roosevelt reads at a fourth grade level.

So this overstuffed train begins its race for higher scores already far, far behind.

Botello says teachers have been coping with their students' weak reading skills by devising ways to reach the substance of their lessons without relying on independent reading. The ninth grade curriculum includes Shakespeare, but most of her students can't read and comprehend *Romeo and Juliet* on their own. So she reads passages with them, and the class takes off from there.

This approach allows her to have good, thoughtful discussions about the play. But it doesn't work when students sit down in front of a test to answer questions that nobody can read or explain to them.

So now, says Botello, the faculty is focusing more on teaching reading.

Roosevelt will be divided into nine mini-schools of about 550 students, so adolescents and adults can get to know each other.

"This will work in the long term," says Botello, "but not in a just few months." After a highly critical state audit, Roosevelt has been ordered to show higher scores on tests given this spring or face possible state takeover.

Under the new federal law, schools will be judged by test scores. Low-scoring schools will have two years to reach their first targets.

In an attempt to comply with these demands, the school has hired Princeton Review to help its students score higher right away, even if they don't actually know more.

The new federal law gives low-scoring schools two years to reach its initial targets, not much longer than Roosevelt was given.

Roosevelt actually embarked on a journey of reform five years ago.

"A lot of teachers put in a lot of time to try to turn it around," says Will Adams, who teaches Japanese. The program's centerpiece was a ninth grade house system, very similar to the mini-schools now planned. "We had it for three years and we started to see results. Student attendance was great," he says.

But then, funding for reform dried up. New state rules on student-teacher ratios made scheduling a nightmare. Also, Adams notes, "We had three changes in superintendents. We had district reorganization. And we made mistakes, too. We're new at reform. It takes five years of sustained effort. We stalled."

Now, with faculty frustration running high, "we're hemorrhaging teachers," says Adams. He reports 28 percent of the school's teachers are not fully certified.

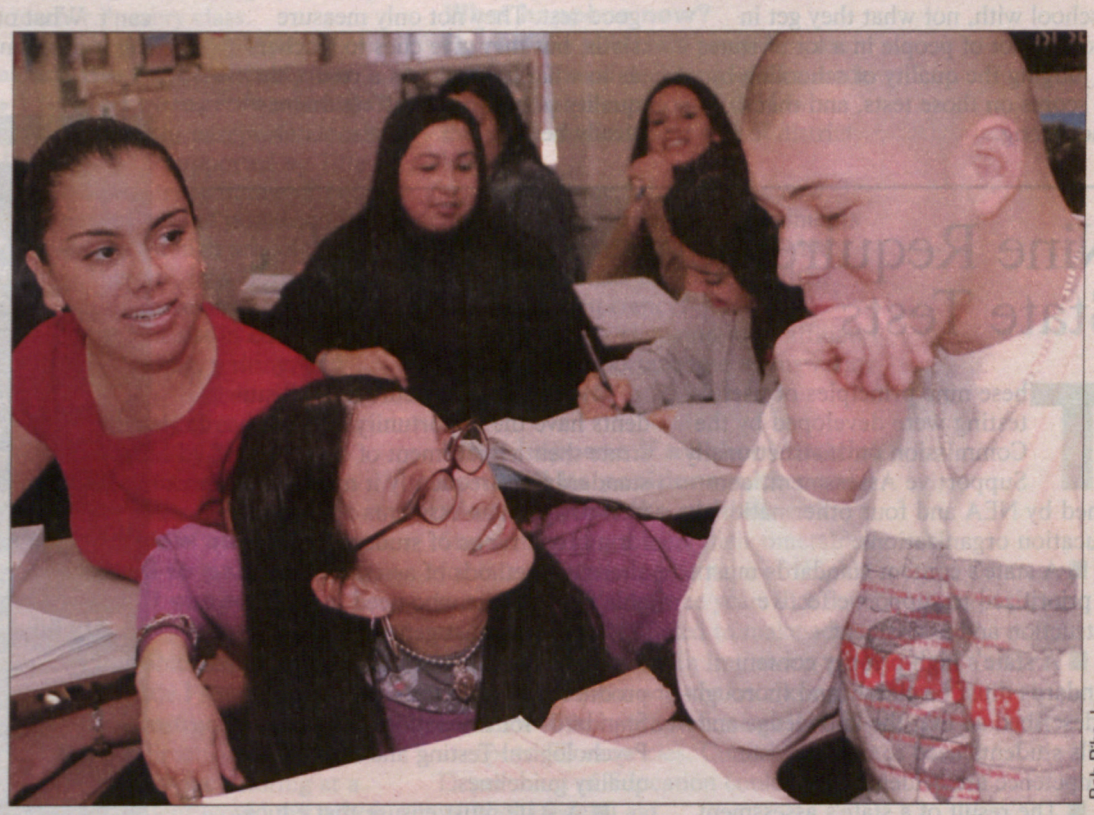
Still, Botello, Adams, and many others at the school are not giving up. Despite the losses, Roosevelt still has a large core of talented teacher leaders, including 10 who are National Board Certified, including Botello.

"We have accomplished teachers, and our new teachers are high energy, committed and compassionate," says Botello. "My priority is to keep the young teachers here and help them get to where they feel they can make a difference." She says all the pressure on Roosevelt has focused and unified the faculty: Everybody understands that things must change.

The reform effort five years ago, says Botello, "was like a practice run. We ran into all the barriers. Then they took the money back. We didn't get to finish. But now we're better at it."

Roosevelt has again been promised help, including money. The new federal law also pledges support for struggling schools. Much will depend on whether the promises are kept. ✔

—Alain Jehlen



Bob Riha Jr.

English teacher Kristin Botello and her colleagues have thrown themselves into the effort to boost achievement at Roosevelt High School, but will it be enough?

2006-07

Schools that have not made AYP for four years must take "corrective action," ranging from hiring an outside expert to replacing some staff members.

2007-08

Annual testing in science begins. States again raise the target percentage of students who are "proficient." The target rises in equal increments to 100 percent in 2014.

June 30, 2008

The law expires or (more likely) is reauthorized by Congress with changes.

2008-09

Schools that have not achieved AYP for six years must reopen as charter schools, replace staff, hire private managers, or give control to the state.

2010-11

States again raise the target percentage of students who are "proficient."

June, 2014

Every student in America is "proficient."

Q&A

The Tests We Need, and Why We Need Them

UCLA Professor Emeritus James Popham heads a commission of test experts convened by NEA and four other education organizations to develop a set of requirements for good state tests.

How did you get involved with the field of testing?

I was at UCLA for more than 30 years working in curriculum and instruction, and at first I was not particularly interested in testing. But I found that assessment determines a lot of what goes on in the classroom.

Will the new federal law's emphasis on tests help kids learn?

It can be an incredible opportunity for instructional improvement. Or it can be an incredible opportunity for making educators fail. Instead of being called "The No Child Left Behind Act," the new law could be called "The No Teacher Considered Competent Act." That's because almost every state now uses tests that measure what kids come to school with, not what they get in school. A lot of people in a lot of states are judging the quality of schooling by the scores on those tests, and that's dead wrong.

Is there a way out?

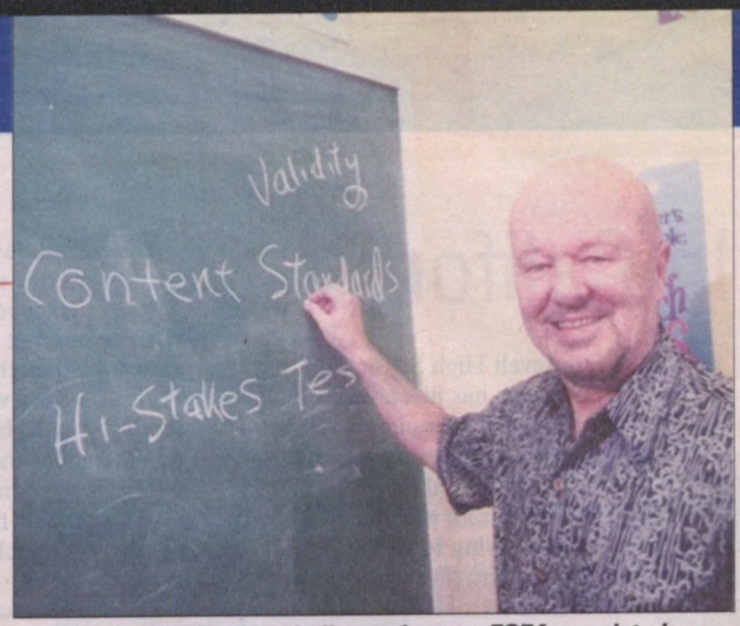
Yes, if states install the right kind of tests. Our commission said each state should prioritize its standards—rate them as absolutely essential, very important, and so on, and then pick a small number of absolutely essential standards to assess—maybe five or six in each subject.

The standards have to be described clearly so teachers know what to do—for example, finding the main idea in a reading passage. That's a very powerful skill. We can describe it so the teacher knows what he or she is aiming at and doesn't have to look at test items to figure it out.

The federal law says the tests have to be aligned with the state standards, but it doesn't say they have to cover everything.

Then, the teacher should get reports, standard by standard, on how the students are doing, so he or she can make adjustments in teaching.

The writing samples used in many states are an example of a good test. They not only measure skills, but they give cues to teachers as to what to teach. As a result, the quality of writing is getting dramatically better.



UCLA's James Popham believes the new ESEA-mandated tests can help instruction if they are designed well.

Won't picking a small number of standards to test make teachers focus too narrowly, and leave out everything that's not assessed?

That could happen, and that's why our commission also said the state should create optional classroom assessments that teachers can use for standards that aren't measured on the state test.

Also, we said there should be a formal mechanism for judging the breadth of the curriculum in each school. Can we eliminate this problem? No. But we can reduce it.

What we have today is assessment hypocrisy—the claim that we can teach and measure all the standards. We can't. What our commission is proposing is assessment honesty. ✔

Nine Requirements For *Useful* State Tests

These nine principles of useful testing were developed by the Commission on Instructionally Supportive Assessment, convened by NEA and four other national education organizations:

- A state's content standards must be prioritized to support effective instruction and assessment.
- A state's high-priority content standards must be clearly and thoroughly described so that the knowledge and skills students need to demonstrate competence are evident.
- The result of a state's assessment of high-priority content standards should be reported standard by standard for each student, school, and district.
- The state must provide educators with optional classroom assessment procedures that can measure students' progress in attaining content standards not assessed by state tests.
- A state must monitor the breadth of the curriculum to ensure that instructional attention is given to all content standards and subject areas, including those that are not assessed by state tests.
- A state must ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of state standards; consequently it must provide well-designed assessments appropriate for a broad range of students, with alternate methods of assessment available for students who need them.
- A state must generally allow test developers a minimum of three years to produce statewide tests that satisfy Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing and similar test-quality guidelines.
- A state must ensure that educators receive professional development focused on how to optimize children's learning based on the results of instructional supportive assessments.
- A state should secure evidence that supports the ongoing improvement of its state assessments to ensure that those assessments are (a) appropriate for the accountability purposes for which they are used, (b) appropriate for determining whether students have attained state standards, (c) appropriate for enhancing instruction, and (d) not the cause of negative consequences. ✔

Resources on ESEA and Testing

- NEA has set up a toll-free hotline for members who want more information about the complex and far-reaching "No Child Left Behind Act," the revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Call 866/373-ESEA (3732).
- *Education Week* has published an excellent summary of the new law, online at www.edweek.com/ew/newstory.cfm?slug=16eseabox.h21&keywords=ESEA. You can find other useful articles on ESEA by searching for ESEA in the *Education Week* archives at www.edweek.com/edsearch.cfm.
- The full text of the new law can be read, searched, and downloaded at http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:h.r.1.enr:
- For more on the requirements for making state testing programs help education, read *Building Tests To Support Instruction and Accountability* by the Commission on Instructionally Supportive Assessment, chaired by James Popham. The commission was convened by NEA and four other national education organizations. The report is at www.nea.org/issues/high-stakes/buildingtests.html.
- Read excerpts from Popham's book, *The Truth About Testing*, on the Web site of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development at www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/popham2001_toc.html. You can also order the book in ASCD's online store.

Who Is 'Highly Qualified'?

Federal law adds new job qualifications for teachers and Title I paraprofessionals.

Annette Mirviss

The "No Child Left Behind Act"—the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act—for the first time defines "highly qualified teacher." More important, it says every class will have one by 2006. The law also holds new requirements for paraprofessionals in Title I programs.

What is a 'highly qualified' teacher under the new law?
Essentially, the law defines a "highly qualified" teacher as one who is fully certified or licensed under state law and competent in the subjects he or she is teaching. There are several ways to prove competence.

What does the law say about certification?
To be "highly qualified," a teacher must have full state certification (which can be through alternative certification routes) or have passed the state teacher license exam and hold a valid license to teach. There is an exception for charter school teachers: They only have to be certified if their state's charter school law says they do.

Anyone for whom the state has waived certification requirements on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis is not rated "highly qualified."

What are the rules for new teachers with respect to academic competence?
New elementary teachers must have a bachelor's degree and also must pass a state test to demonstrate their knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the elementary curriculum.

That test can be the state certification or license test, if that test assesses such subject matter knowledge.

New middle and high school teachers must have a bachelor's degree. They can prove competence in their subject area either by passing a state subject matter test, which can be the state's license exam, or by having an academic major, a graduate degree, an advanced certificate, or coursework equivalent to an academic major in the subject area. This new requirement applies to "core academic subjects," which include English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

How can teachers who are already working demonstrate their academic competence?
All of the options for new teachers are also available to those already on the job. In addition, the law allows states to create for each subject area a non-test evaluation of academic competence that, among other things, provides objective information about the teacher's content knowledge, is applied uniformly throughout the state, "takes into consideration, but [is not] based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject," and is available to the public on request.

National Board Certification in the subject is another way to demonstrate competence.

How soon must all teachers be 'highly qualified' for all the classes they teach?
The law says that starting in the 2002-03 school year, new teachers hired for Title I must meet the requirement. Other teachers have until the end of the 2005-06 school year. States must submit plans next year to show how they will reach the goal of a "highly qualified" teacher in every class.

What are the requirements for Title I funded paraprofessionals?
Starting immediately, paraprofessionals hired for programs supported by Title I must prove competence in one of two ways: Have two years of postsecondary education or have a high school diploma and demonstrate, in a "formal state or local academic assessment," the skills necessary to assist in classroom instruction for reading, writing, and mathematics.

Paraprofessionals already working in programs supported by Title I must meet these requirements by 2006.

What does the law say about duties assigned to paraprofessionals in Title I supported programs?
The new law prohibits assigning paraprofessionals in Title I supported programs to provide instruction to students except under the direct supervision of a teacher, or in one-to-one tutoring at a time when the student would not otherwise be taught by a teacher.

It is now against the law to use a Title I funded paraprofessional instead of a substitute teacher, for example.

Is there any change in required qualifications for other support professionals?
No.

Are there resources to help educators meet the requirements?
School districts must increase the percentage of teachers getting high-quality professional development each year until they reach the goal of 100 percent highly qualified teachers. Federal funds available for professional development have been increased.

Districts are allowed, but not required, to use some of their federal money to train support professionals.

What happens now?
Many of the new law's provisions are general. Critical decisions will be made during implementation of the law at the national, state, and school district levels.

For example, what will the new teacher tests and non-test assessments contain? How will Title I supported paraprofessionals demonstrate their academic competency?

NEA and its state and local affiliates can play an important role in answering these questions.

What happens if a school district can't fill its positions with people who meet the guidelines?
States that do not meet their timetables for increasing the percentage of "highly qualified" teachers three years in a row and that have also failed to make adequate yearly progress in improving student achievement will not be allowed to hire new Title I paraprofessionals except to fill vacancies. Conceivably, the Department of Education could also withhold federal aid.

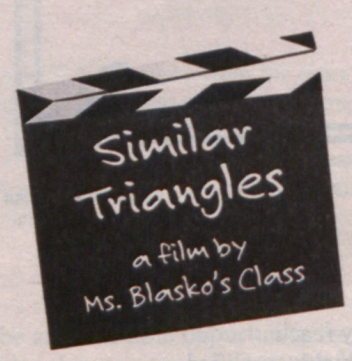
But neither of these sanctions will persuade more "highly qualified" people to apply.

One strategy that would work: Give educators smaller classes, more planning time, and higher pay. And start listening to their ideas for improving schools. ✔

—Alain Jehlen

For more: Many crucial details will be worked out in the coming months. Call NEA's new ESEA hotline, 866/373-ESEA (3732) for the latest information.

Learning. Cleverly



How do you get a classroom full of restless kids interested in geometry? Pique their interest and their enthusiasm with Apple's revolutionary iMovie.™

"Do you know how to tell the height of something if you can't reach the top?" Maria Blasko's students learn a valuable lesson in geometry.

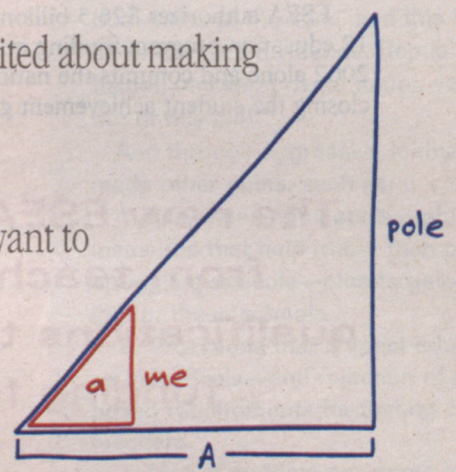
Maria Blasko, a math teacher in East Palo Alto, California, uses iMovie to take lessons out of the textbook and give them real-world applications. "With the 'Similar Triangles' movie, I took a concept that can be very hard for students to grasp in the classroom environment and took it outside, to get the students involved in the process. Instead of listening to me

By filming the "Similar Triangles" lesson, Maria Blasko brings new life to an old subject.

disguised as a movie.

iMovie uses simple drag-and-drop technology. So you can focus on teaching, not editing.

tell them about the relationship between similar triangles of differing size, they experienced it. And because we were filming the process they really focused on the assignment and became excited about making the movie. The best part is that once the lesson is done the students want to watch it again and again. So it really reinforces what they've learned." In short, iMovie, combined with inspired teaching, is a formula for student success. To see how Maria and other teachers are using iMovie to energize lessons and connect to their students, call 1-800-800-APPL or visit www.apple.com/teachimovie.



Ms. Blasko built a stronger relationship with her students by combining a passion for teaching with the power of iMovie.

Think different.

© 2001 Apple Computer, Inc. All rights reserved. Apple, the Apple logo and Think different are registered trademarks and iMovie is a trademark of Apple Computer, Inc.

Congress Passes Sweeping

The new Elementary and Secondary Education Act will affect you in one way or another. So read up, take notes, and ask questions.

Back in 1975, IDEA—the federal Individuals With Disabilities Education Act—reshaped the American classroom by ushering in "inclusive" education. If you're still catching your breath from that one, sit down as you read about the newly amended and reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The revised ESEA, dubbed the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 by its Congressional sponsors, will greatly impact the lives of educators and students over the life of its term, from Fiscal Year 2002 to FY 2007.

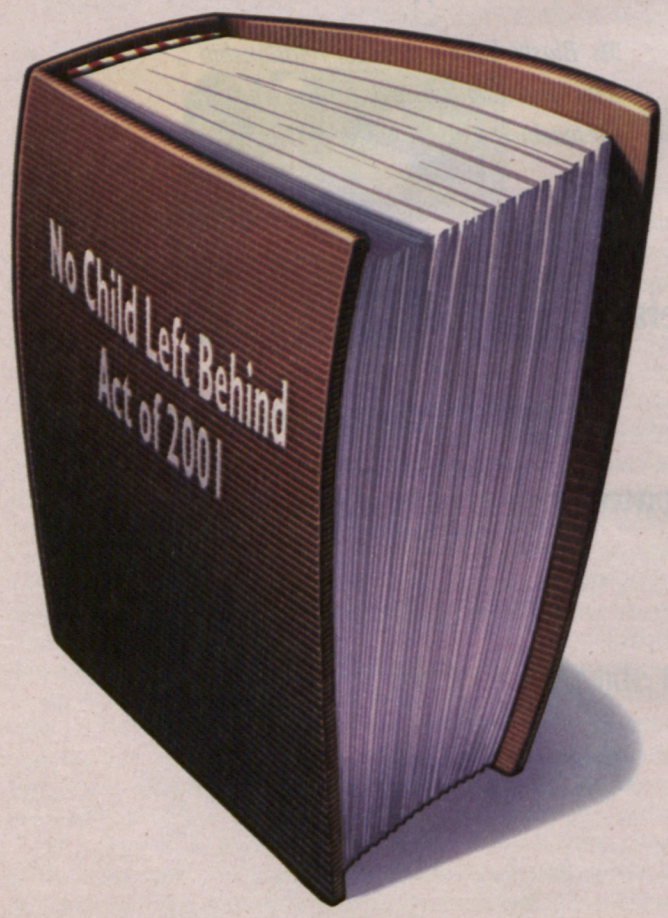
ESEA authorizes $26.5 billion in K-12 education program funding in FY 2002 alone and commits the nation to closing the student achievement gap over 12 years through "accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind."

While the new law, signed by President Bush on January 9, speaks to NEA's core priorities of student achievement and teacher quality, it does not fulfill a 26-year-old federal promise to pay 40 percent of the cost of special education.

And ESEA imposes six years of requirements on schools and cash-strapped state governments with no guarantee of resources after an initial $3.5 billion (20 percent) funding increase in FY 2002.

But NEA did mount a successful three-year lobbying campaign to keep damaging proposals out of ESEA *(see next page)* and improve ESEA's "accountability" provisions, making them less punitive, more flexible, and more focused on the achievement of all students.

The new ESEA touches everything from teacher and Title I para qualifications to student testing and funding for rural schools.



Illustrations by John MacDonald

A Glimpse of the Law

For all of these hard-won protections, however, ESEA gives the federal government a new, hands-on role in public education that will directly affect you—in one way or another.

Among the many features of this 1,080-page statute:

■ **A 12-year goal to make every student "proficient" in state reading and math tests.** By the 2005-06 school year, each state must administer annual reading and math tests of its own design in grades 3-8, and once between grades 9-12. The tests must be aligned to state standards and must include multiple measures of achievement.

State achievement tests must measure both the performance of a whole school and that of disadvantaged "subgroups," to ensure that no single group of students is allowed to consistently underperform *(for more, see cover story)*.

A school that displays a lack of "adequate yearly progress" will be given technical assistance and placed on a long-term improvement schedule with progressively stronger corrective measures, culminating in school "restructuring" or "reconstitution" in the seventh year. A school currently on a state improvement plan remains on the current schedule—it cannot "turn back the clock" to an earlier corrective stage.

■ **Civil rights protections.** If a struggling school does not make adequate yearly progress for three consecutive years, the district must offer "supplemental educational services" chosen by parents from a list compiled by the state. These private or "community-based organizations" must demonstrate past performance and comply with civil rights laws—barring them from discriminating against either program participants or employees.

■ **Strong teacher quality provisions.** Beginning with the 2002-03 school year, each district receiving Title I funds (to help disadvantaged children gain basic and advanced skills) must ensure that all teachers in a program supported by Title I are "highly qualified"—meaning they have been fully certified or licensed under state law and have demonstrated competence.

Moreover, all new teachers entering the profession must take a written test. And every state must develop a plan to ensure that all teachers (not just those supported by Title I) teaching "core academic subjects" are highly qualified no later than the end of the 2005-06 school year *(for more, go to page 11)*.

■ **Stronger quality provisions for Title I paraeducators.** All Title I paras hired after January 8, 2002 must have two years of postsecondary education or be a high school graduate who can demonstrate—on a state or local assessment—the skills needed to assist in teaching reading, writing, or math. All existing Title I paras must meet one of these requirements within four years.

ESEA lists allowable duties for Title I paras, specifies that they must work under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher, and prohibits them from substituting for a certified teacher *(for more, go to page 11)*.

Education Law

■ **Flexible grants for everything from professional development to school repair.** The new law combines the previous Eisenhower Professional Development and Class Size Reduction programs into one program that funds a broad range of state and local training and recruitment activities—everything from innovative professional development to recruitment of highly qualified teachers to reduce class size. A cautionary note: Among the "allowable" uses for these grants are "tenure reform" and merit pay programs.

ESEA also allows several new uses for the Innovative Grant Program for states and districts, including urgent school repairs and the hiring and support of school nurses. This program has been funded at $385 million in FY 2002.

The Bush administration failed to gain unregulated statewide block grants for all 50 states—allowing the consolidation of all ESEA state funding for any purpose—but did gain provisions allowing up to seven states and 150 districts to consolidate funds from several programs into a block grant useable for any ESEA purpose.

■ **More money for reading programs.** ESEA authorizes a huge spending increase for four federal reading and literacy programs, from $410 million in FY 2001 to $1.24 billion in FY 2002. Each program emphasizes professional development and—take careful note—the use of "scientifically based reading research" for instruction.

■ **Greater federal support for rural education.** ESEA authorizes $300 million in FY 2002 and "such sums" for each of the next five years for two rural education programs. One program allows small, rural districts to consolidate allocations under a few major ESEA programs. The other, the new Rural and Low Income School Program, funds activities—subject to Title I regulations—to boost student achievement and the quality of instruction in poor rural schools. ✔

For more on ESEA, go to the NEA Legislative Action Center at www.nea.org/lac/esea. To read the text of the law, go http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c107:h.r.1.enr:. For specific ESEA information from NEA, call 866/373-ESEA (3732).

Your Dues Will Do It

NEA Gears Up for ESEA Implementation

Now that ESEA has been signed into law, NEA and its state and local affiliates must push to ensure that the statute is adequately funded and fairly implemented.

This will be a huge challenge for NEA affiliates. For starters, they'll have to ensure that "transferable" and "flexible" grants go the right places; that rights of members are protected in student testing, school improvement, and teacher/para "quality" situations; and that collective bargaining and civil rights guarantees are upheld.

NEA is mounting an ESEA awareness campaign to "provide strategies and support systems for affiliate leaders and staff to capitalize on ESEA opportunities such as collective bargaining, professional development, ESP quality, and school district policy," says Deloris Rozier, NEA director of affiliate capacity building.

This effort will involve, among other things, national and regional conferences on ESEA, an NEA rapid response team, a dedicated Web site, and a toll-free number for members (now up and running at 866/373-ESEA).

The linchpin of ESEA enforcement will, of course, be UniServ staff. "We'll ask UniServ staffers what they need, and then ensure they are well educated on ESEA," Rozier says.

Adds Dorothy Harrell, NEA's newly appointed ESEA project coordinator: "UniServ staff will have easy access to interpretation of the law and its rules and regulations, and understand what discretion is allowed for states."

For more on ESEA, stayed tuned. ✔

Your Dues Did It

10 Ways NEA Reshaped ESEA

The newly reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act was dramatically improved through a dogged three-year lobbying campaign waged by NEA lobbyists, elected leaders, and local activists—including 80,000 member "cyberlobbyists" who took the teacher and ESP viewpoint directly to lawmakers.

Backed by 2.6 million educators, NEA's six-member team of ESEA lobbyists did what they do *best.* They scoured revision after revision of bill language, attended countless hearings, made detailed written comments, and built multi-organization coalitions around key educational issues.

At every level of NEA, "we lobbied hard on the issues," stresses NEA Government Relations Director Diane Shust. "We worked with key players on both sides of the aisle, and this bipartisan work paid dividends. Republicans helped us keep private tuition vouchers out of this bill!"

And through aggressive lobbying NEA made other gains, such as:

1. Fair, meaningful accountability measures that help rather than punish struggling schools—plus targeted funding for these schools.

2. Provisions that respect educators as individuals—and rejection of proposed requirements for testing current teachers.

3. Use of multiple measures to gauge student achievement.

4. Strong civil rights protections for ESEA program participants and employees—plus continued funding for hate crime prevention programs.

5. Increased professional development opportunities for paraeducators and limits on classroom duties for Title I paras—plus rejection of a proposed Title I para hiring freeze.

6. Rejection of a proposal for unregulated statewide ESEA block grants.

7. Continued support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards—which had been slated to lose all of its federal funding.

8. New flexibility and resources for rural schools.

9. Continued protection of collective bargaining rights and civil liability for teachers.

10. Rejection of a proposal requiring parents of ESL students to "opt in" to a Limited-English-Proficient Program. The new ESEA allows parents to remove their children immediately from such a program and removes arbitrary time limits on bilingual services. ✔

Buttoning Up For a Hot-Button Issue

Washington teachers brave the elements, win a 15-day strike for health care benefits.

They endured rain, wind, snow, and a resistant school board. But after a 15-day strike, members of the Hoquiam Teachers' Association in Washington state convinced the school district to pay its fair share—along with the state—of employee health benefits.

Before the strike, some teachers had paid as much as $497 monthly for benefits, while the school district paid virtually nothing.

Under the new two-year agreement, the district pays the total cost of health benefits for single employees. The contract, ratified December 10, increases the school district's health contribution to some $105,000 over two years.

[At press time, a few wrinkles remain. The district still was deducting money from employee paychecks to pay for health benefits, says HTA President Suzanne Hierholzer. The Washington Education Association is working with the district to clarify any misunderstanding of the agreement.]

The situation in Hoquiam reflects a nationwide problem when it comes to health benefits.

"Health care is definitely one of the hot-button issues," says Rod Regan, political programs director for WEA. "Costs are increasing and districts and the state are trying to pay less and shift the costs onto school employees."

Last year, insurance premiums increased by an average of 11 percent, far outpacing the rate of inflation (3.3 percent), according to the National Coalition on Healthcare Costs. The coalition estimates premiums will increase another 15 percent this year.

In Washington, state allocations for health benefits have not matched increasing insurance costs. Consequently, many school districts are passing the burden onto their employees.

"We're seeing the increase in health insurance costs really eat into the amount of salary teachers can take home," says Lynn Ohman, NEA's director of collective bargaining and member advocacy. "The school districts either have to put the cost back on the teachers in higher co-pays or take it out of the money allocated for salaries."

WEA is working with UniServ staff statewide to outline health care bargaining goals and to support local affiliates during their negotiations. The state Association also is comparing coverage between districts and between public schools and the private sector.

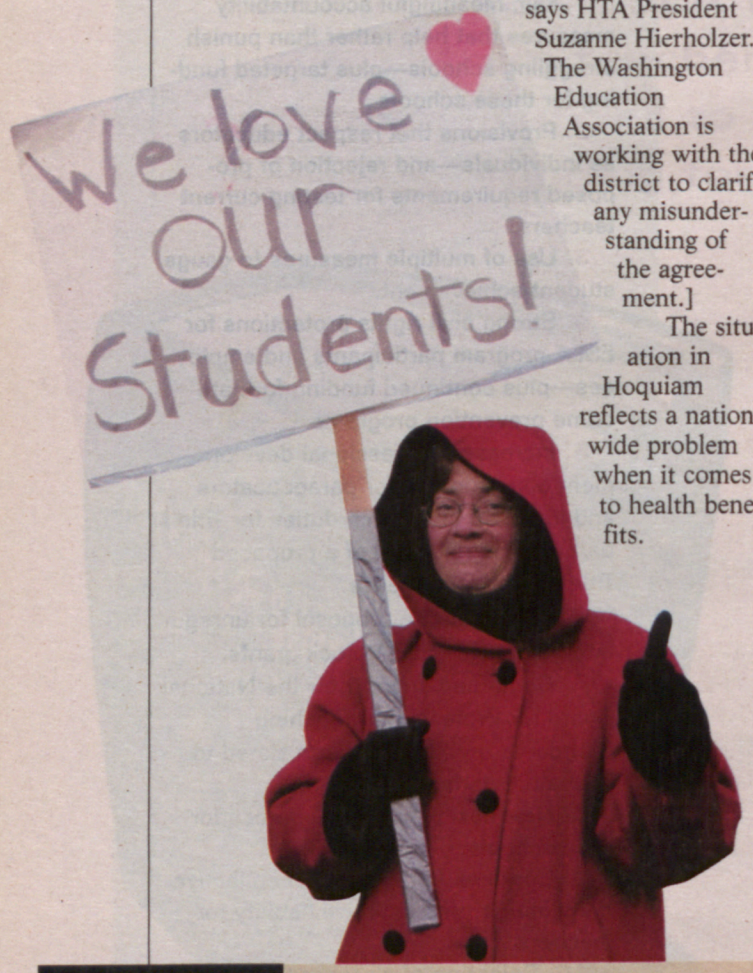
Other WEA local affiliates have received additional health care funding with little administrative resistance. Hoquiam is the only Washington local that has participated in an extended strike.

In some ways, though, the strike was inevitable. HTA's frustration with the school system had been building for about four years, Hierholzer says. Last year, Hoquiam's 124 teachers took the district to mediation to stop a move to take back "incentive hours" teachers earn for work outside the school day.

Because of the mediation process, the district ultimately dropped its take-back plan and agreed to provide an extra 20 minutes of elementary planning time per week.

But school officials this year refused to implement the extra time unless teachers accepted the district's initial contract, which did not include health care expenses, Hierholzer

"Health care is definitely one of the hot-button issues. Costs are increasing and districts and the state are trying to pay less and shift costs onto school employees."
—Rod Regan, political programs director, Washington Education Association



THE BOTTOM LINE

TOXIC SCHOOLS: A new report says hundreds of thousands of U.S. children attend schools built near toxic waste sites, putting them at greater risk for contracting asthma, cancer, and other diseases. www.childproofing.org/Exec.html.

VIRTUAL APPLES: Need more than an apple left on your desk to keep up your teaching morale? A new Web site offers teachers motivational quotes, humor, and an interactive bulletin board. www.dailyapples.com.

TEACHER SKILLS: A new four-state study indicates that higher-than-average student literacy skills are directly linked to outstanding skills on the part of teachers. www.aera.net/communications/news/020121.htm.

SCHOOL SIZE: In 1999-2000, the average student population at a U.S. public primary school was 446. For middle schools it was 595, and for high schools, 752. http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/quarterly/fall/q3-5.asp#H4.

Washington Education Association

Hoquiam teachers came out of this strike with pride in their Association.

WEAC

Mequon-Thiensville teachers make presence felt at school board meeting.

reports.

Teachers later discovered the district had an extra $400,000 for employee benefits that school officials had overlooked in a bookkeeping mistake.

The school district refused to use the money for health care and instead wanted to fund technology and maintenance needs, Hierholzer notes. Based on all of the issues, 92 percent of the membership voted to strike.

"The handwriting was clear and our members were not willing to put up with it, particularly when the district had the money and it was meant for teachers' compensation," Hierholzer says.

With the strike behind her, Hierholzer is looking ahead to the next negotiations. Although the new contract covers teachers for two years, Hierholzer expects that health benefits will decrease next year if insurance premiums increase.

In the meantime, she appreciates the support she and her colleagues receive from parents and WEA.

"Our people know how valuable the WEA is to each of them and how personally connected we are to it," Hierholzer concludes. "We are the WEA. I think that was a realization for many people. There was a real sense of pride in their professional Association." ✔

—Kristen Loschert

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

■ They've done everything from "work to rule" to leaflet school open houses. And in late January, 80 members of the **Mequon-Thiensville (Wisconsin) Education Association**, backed by supporters, packed a school board meeting to demand a fair settlement in their 2001-03 contract negotiations.

Like educators in more than 300 Wisconsin school districts, Mequon-Thiensville teachers have been without a contract since last June 30. Salaries have fallen behind inflation, and Wisconsin teachers have fallen behind the national average for the first time since 1978.

The chief culprits: Wisconsin's Qualified Economic Offer law, which severely limits teachers' ability to bargain a fair contract; and state "revenue controls," which prevent school districts from raising the funds needed to maintain quality education.

■ The state budget proposed by California Governor Gray Davis "does a good job of protecting education funding, which is critical to maintaining the momentum of school improvement," says **California Teachers Association** President Wayne Johnson.

"Despite economic hard times," Johnson notes, "the governor is making students a top priority. He has increased funding for kindergarten through community colleges despite a $12 billion shortfall in the budget."

■ **The Colorado Education Association** has joined an inter-union coalition to challenge Governor Bill Owens' ban of state employee payroll deductions for union dues and other personal contributions. The governor's order, which took effect November 1, circumvented the legislature, which had defeated many such payroll bills since the mid-1990s.

■ In mid-January, the **Nevada State Education Association** organized a well-attended town hall discussion at Chaparral High School to focus on the education funding crisis in the state. "Currently, per pupil spending in Nevada is more than $1,000 below the national average, and that is unfair to our children and negatively impacts the economy of our state," NSEA President Terry Hickman told the crowd.

■ Members of **Baldwinsville (New York) Educational Support Professionals** have bargained a three-year contract that boosts salaries by 4.65 percent in 2000-01 and 4.65 percent (5.2 percent for clericals) in each of the remaining years. Other gains: paid lunch for the clerical unit, longevity increases of 49 percent to 85 percent, and a 5 percent increase in summer school and extra duty pay.

Illinois Teachers Strike, Save Health Benefit

With rock-solid community support, 43 NEA teacher members in Sandoval, Illinois waged a successful 17-day strike in November and December—in snow, sleet, wind, and rain—for a decent contract. Their new three-year agreement calls for a 5 percent salary increase in each year, a 25 percent increase in employer-paid health care premiums, and no docked days for the strike.

Sandoval teachers chose to strike when, after months of bargaining and federal mediation, the district threw down the gauntlet. "The school superintendent was out of touch with the community," reports Illinois Education Association-IEA UniServ Director Judy Walker. "The district had more than a $1 million surplus in the education fund. Yet they tried to force these members to give up their fully employer-paid health insurance benefit as a precondition to settlement!" ✔

COLLEGE FOR ALL?: A college education at most private and many public colleges and universities continues to be prohibitively expensive for low-income students, according to a study of 2,887 degree-granting colleges. www.luminafoundation.org.

RECESSION TOLL: Here's a grim estimate based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics figures: Between March and November 2001, almost 1 million Americans lost their jobs and their health insurance. http://familiesusa.org/media/press/2001/lostjobs.htm.

MINORITY TEACHERS: While minority student populations are growing, minority teachers make up just 13 percent of the U.S. teaching force, and that number is expected to drop to 5 percent by 2005. www.sefatl.org/Patterns%20text.htm.

SCHOOL FUNDING: In 1998-99, the local share of school funding varied widely. In states with more than one school district, local funding comprised from 14 to 87 percent of overall funding. http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/quarterly/fall/q3-6.asp.

Public Education Embroiled In a Taxing Situation

School funding has been battered by the recession. Here's how poorly designed tax systems are making the situation worse.

Budget shortfalls and poorly planned tax strategies have combined during this recession to put increased strain on public education funding. Consider these facts:

• Combined state budget shortfalls have now soared to $40 billion—the result of a recession-related revenue decline, soaring health care costs, and the growing price tag for homeland security. So says a recent analysis by the National Association of State Budget Officers and the National Governors Association.

• Many states have compounded their shortfalls by making big pre-recession tax cuts or by failing to create tax systems that keep pace with growing personal incomes and a growing population's need for services.

• States' use of property tax abatements to attract corporate investment is at an historic high—at a time when most other state and local taxes are linked to slow-growth aspects of economic activity, such as alcohol and gasoline sales.

• "We have a tax system instituted in the early 1900s," notes Ed Hurley, an economist in NEA Research. "It's a system focused on tax revenue from the sale of manufactured goods. But in the 21st century, we've shifted from manufacturing to services, especially electronic commerce."

• Forty-five states and the District of Columbia rely heavily on the sales tax to fund critical services, including education, according to a study recently completed by the University of Tennessee's Center for Business and Economic Research. Yet in 2001, the report estimates, state and local governments lost an estimated $13.3 billion in sales tax revenue "due to the inability to collect taxes from remote online purchases."

And by 2006, the revenue loss could climb to $45.2 billion.

States with Built-In Deficits

How do we extract ourselves from this taxing morass? NEA Resolution A-13(f) states: "The state and local share of education finance must be derived from a tax system that is balanced and complementary in nature, includes all broad-based taxes, reduces the excessive reliance on property taxes, and protects subsistence income." And NEA is working with state affiliates to bring tax policies in line with this ideal.

NEA Research, which provides training, publications, and consulting services for state affiliates on tax policy and school finance issues, has helped several NEA state affiliates introduce to legislators the concept of *structural deficits*.

Structural deficits, as opposed to *cyclical deficits* caused by recessions, arise when there's a mismatch between growth in spending needed to maintain current services and growth in revenues from current taxes and fees.

States hardest hit by structural deficits often have chronic fiscal problems—in good economic times or bad. They lack personal income taxes and find it hard to capture revenue from economic growth.

In Tennessee, a state with a high corporate tax but no personal income tax, a heavy reliance on sales taxes has yielded a "huge structural deficit of $500 million a year" and two downgrades of state bond ratings, notes Graham Greeson, research director for the Tennessee Education Association. This unending fiscal crisis has harmed public education *(see page 19)* and has prompted TEA to put tax reform at the top of its legislative agenda.

Two NEA state affiliates are working to create better tax systems:

• **Being proactive in Nevada.** In fast-growing Nevada, school funding is based almost exclusively on gaming and sales tax revenues, while corporations pay state taxes amounting to only $100 per employee a year.

In 2000, members of the Nevada State Education Association shook up the status quo by campaigning for a ballot initiative to levy a 4 percent tax on business net profits to support public education. While this publicly popular "Let's Be Fair" initiative was halted on constitutional grounds by the state Supreme Court, NSEA built a reputation as a force for tax reform.

The state legislature quickly created the Governor's Task Force on Tax Policy in Nevada, which was charged with focusing on broader tax policy issues and considering ways to reduce reliance on "volatile or cyclical revenue streams."

NSEA Executive Director Ken Lange was named to this eight-member body. NSEA will be applying "Universal Guiding Principles of Fair Taxation Policy" to gauge others' recommendations—measuring for qualities like tax stability, equity, simplicity, and accountability.

During the tax panel's deliberations, Lange adds, NSEA members will be conducting a public campaign on the pressing needs of Nevada schools. The goal: raise the state's per-pupil expenditure to the national average.

"This increase will lead to substantial raises and better working conditions in the classroom," Lange says.

• **Being aggressive in Michigan.** Public schools in Michigan are heavily dependent on sales and use tax revenues.

"But when somebody elects to make out-of-state purchases by phone, catalogue, or the Internet, the state school aid fund loses millions of dollars in uncollected revenues," says Michigan Education Association field lobbyist Dave Stafford. "If we could collect use taxes alone that are owed by consumers, Michigan schools would get an

Doing the math

Forty-five states and the District of Columbia rely heavily on the sales tax to fund critical services, including education.

In 2001, state and local governments lost an estimated $13.3 billion in sales tax revenue from remote online purchases.

By 2006, revenue loss could climb to $45.2 billion.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Tennessee

extra $65 to $70 million a year."

That's why MEA worked with other organizations to win passage of model legislation crafted by the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, a consortium of state and local governments that is working to simplify and standardize state sales tax laws.

The Project's model law, now adopted by Michigan and 19 other states, commits the signing states to meet in a conference this year to simplify everything from tax rates to definitions of taxable goods—and to certify software that will make it easier for all retailers, both on Main Street and on the Internet, to collect sales taxes.

The Project's ultimate goal: prompt strong Congressional action on interstate Internet commerce.

• **Making the tax issue an education issue.** "If we are to continue to improve our schools," NEA President Bob Chase stresses, "we must continue to invest in research-proven reforms like small classes and better pay and professional development for teachers. Real reform requires real money."

And in many states, real education reform may require tax reform.

NEA affiliates "should always pay attention to and be involved in tax policy," recommends Nevada's Lange. "It's not always exciting stuff, but it's good for organizational development. As an Association, we need to look for solutions and play a leadership role in tax issues—not just be a petitioner." ✔

For more on sales tax revenue loss to Internet commerce, go to www.statestudies.org/ecomreport.pdf.

And for more on the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, go to www.streamlinedsalestax.org.

In Hamilton County, Great Ideas But No Money

Tennessee educators know how to boost inner-city achievement—but don't know how to get legislators to pay for it.

Want solid ideas for closing the student achievement gap? Look no further than Hamilton County, Tennessee, a large urban/suburban district where NEA members and administrators work as one through collaborative bargaining and increasingly think as one.

Ask either "side" what it takes to improve the performance of a struggling school, and you'll hear about must-haves like instructional support, adequate resources, and strong leadership—and the funding to make it all happen.

LaFrederick Thirkill, a negotiating team member for the 2,400-member Hamilton County Education Association, gives the issue of inner-city student achievement plenty of thought, both in writing his master's thesis and working as a fourth-year music teacher in Chattanooga's Howard Elementary.

Thirkill argues for stepped-up supports and resources for urban teachers. "At one point at Howard Elementary, 60 percent of our teachers had less than three years of experience," he points out. "New urban teachers don't have many strategies, are often shocked by their initial experience with cultural diversity, and are demoralized by a shortage of materials. I arrived at this school to find a limited number of textbooks and no instruments or CDs to demonstrate my lessons."

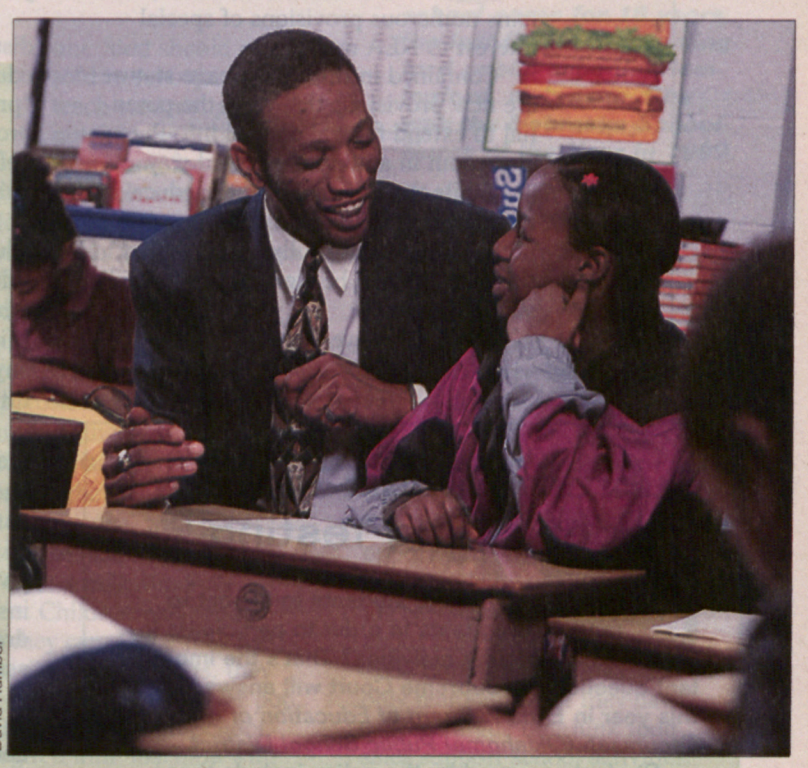
Across the bargaining table, Superintendent Jesse Register plays in near-perfect harmony. His administration has drafted a five-year strategic plan that emphasizes recruitment and retention of good teachers, especially for inner-city schools.

"Poverty schools need more to be successful," the superintendent emphasizes. "It's important to support teachers in them—incentive pay for inner-city schools will be an issue for negotiations—and we think we need instructional support staff working in them."

Register has advanced a range of thoughtful proposals, including specialized administrators for state-designated "on-notice" schools; experienced, school-based consulting teachers; and even a longer school year.

But Tennessee's a place where even popular, visionary administrators soon hit the brick wall of school finance.

And this is a wall of double thickness: an inequitable state funding formula that pays too little to districts with many special-needs kids, financed by a state tax system that never keeps up with the growing needs of all schools and students.



David Humber

LaFrederick Thirkill knows that inner-city educators need more resources and support to do their best. But that'll require more than a penny sales tax increase.

Hamilton County can barely fund its school budget from state sources, forcing it to seek private and foundation grants for everything from school materials to whole new buildings. "We've become champions at pursuing grants," sighs the superintendent.

And Tennessee's chronic fiscal crisis, compounded by the current recession, is undermining public education across the state, threatening pre-school programs in the inner cities and driving hundreds of teachers—especially in border counties—to cross state lines to teach for more money.

"Hamilton County sits on the Georgia border," notes UniServ Coordinator Gerry Dowler. "We're losing 60 to 90 teachers a year to Georgia schools, including some fabulous, highly experienced educators. This affects the morale of the teachers who stay behind and hang in for measly two-and-a-half percent raises, hoping legislators will fix the problem."

But Tennessee lawmakers only seem to favor a "fix" that drives shoppers as well as teachers across state lines—raising the sales tax another penny. Many Tennesseans already pay combined state and local sales taxes reaching a whopping 8.75 percent.

"We need a tax system that offers continuity, grows with the clientele of our schools, and pays teacher salaries that'll carry us to the 22nd century," argues Dowler.

"In my opinion, this state has to deal with revenue and tax reform," agrees Superintendent Register. "Anti-tax people's voices are loud, so teachers, parents, and community people have to make [an equally] loud noise for education funding." ✔

ESEA Extends Federal Reach in Schools

New legislation will affect every classroom and school employee in the country on issues from school prayer to parental rights to student discipline.

Signed by President Bush on January 8, the No Child Left Behind Act (also known as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA) contains numerous provisions of special interest to NEA members.

Contained in this 1,080-page statute are new provisions that have the potential to extend federal control into the classroom in an unprecedented way.

While the full extent of the educational changes effected by the law may not be known until fully implemented, there's reason to be alert to some provisions.

• **School Prayer.** This fall, the Department of Education must publish a guidance defining "constitutionally protected school prayer." The guidance has to be approved by the Justice Department and updated every two years.

By October 1 each year, every school district must certify in writing to its state education department that it does not "prevent" or "deny" "constitutionally protected prayer in public schools," as defined by the Education Department guidance.

By November 1 each year, every state education department must send the Education Department the names of school districts that failed to file the certificate or that were accused of denying any person the right to engage in constitutionally protected school prayer.

The Secretary of Education is given the power to investigate such charges and to enforce the law, presumably by cutting off federal funds.

• **Parental Rights.** The new statute gives parents the right to inspect "any instructional material" used in their children's classes, except tests or academic assessments.

Parents also are guaranteed the right to review any student survey that asks about political or religious beliefs, mental problems, illegal or anti-social behavior, or sexual attitudes. And they can have their children "opt out" of any such survey and any non-emergency physical examination.

School districts are required to adopt written policies spelling out these rights and to give parents notice each year about the policies and the dates of any surveys or physical examinations.

Significantly, an amendment to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Community Act also grants parents the right to remove their children from any federally funded drug and violence prevention program, including such programs that deal with "sexual harassment and abuse" and "victimization associated with prejudice and intolerance."

• **Student Discipline.** One part of the new legislation, called the "Paul D. Coverdell Teacher Protection Act of 2001," purports to protect teachers from frivolous lawsuits filed by students and their parents in discipline cases.

In fact, the statute is so narrowly drawn and rife with exceptions, that—in practical terms—it affords very little real legal protection.

Specifically, the new law says that K-12 school employees (including education support professionals) can't be sued for hurting a student if the injury occurred while the employee was engaged in "efforts to control, discipline, expel, or suspend a student or maintain order or control in the classroom or school."

Importantly, this protection is not available if the employee's actions don't fully comply with federal, state, or local laws or where the employee engaged in "willful or reckless misconduct," "gross negligence," or "flagrant indifference to the rights or safety" of the student.

This means that a plaintiff's attorney can claim that the employee was "reckless" or violated the student's constitutional or civil rights.

More importantly, the law affords employees no protection in the much larger category of cases where students are injured outside of the disciplinary context.

The statute would not apply, for example, where the student is hurt in a playground accident, during a chemistry lab experiment, or in shop class, and sues the teacher for negligent supervision.

That's one good reason to maintain NEA membership. Members are covered for these kinds of lawsuits by NEA's Educators Employment Liability Insurance Program, which will pay up to $1 million in damages plus attorneys' fees.

In an interesting footnote to the legislative history, Senator Mitch McConnell from Kentucky urged his colleagues to vote for the bill precisely because "the teachers unions" promote their liability insurance "as a key reason for joining their union," specifically citing literature from NEA affiliates in Texas, Missouri, and Maine.

• **Boy Scouts.** If a school allows outside groups to use its facilities for after school meetings, then it must allow the Boy Scouts to use its facilities for such meetings, even if the school objects to the Scouts' discriminatory membership policy.

Another provision in the law, however, makes clear that schools still are free not to sponsor Scout troops if they so choose.

• **Funding Options.** Finally, the legislation permits—but does not require—state and local school districts to spend federal funds on a number of activities, including: student drug testing, criminal record checks of school employees (regardless of date hired), merit pay, tenure reform, and teacher testing. ✔

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

Supreme Court To Hear Student Drug Testing

Can schools require students to submit to random drug tests in order to participate in extracurricular activities? That's the important question the Supreme Court will answer later this year in *Earls v. Board of Education of Tecumseh (Oklahoma) Public School District.*

Students covered by the policy include those who want to belong to the Future Farmers of America, Future Homemakers of America, band, choir, the Academic Team, and cheerleading squad, as well as all sports teams.

Students are selected at random, called out of class, and directed to a bathroom where they must provide a urine sample. Teachers serve as test monitors, waiting outside the bathroom stall while the student urinates and then pouring the urine sample into two bottles. Together, the teacher and student seal the bottles for transport to the testing lab.

Last year, the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the drug testing program violates students' rights under the Fourth Amendment to be free from warrantless searches. A school district, the court said, cannot impose a "random suspicionless drug testing policy" unless the district can show that there is "some identifiable drug abuse problem" among the students to be tested. In this Oklahoma school district, there was no evidence of any such drug problem, the court held.

While courts in Colorado, Pennsylvania, and Texas also have struck down similar student drug testing policies, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit has upheld a comparable Indiana school district policy.

The High Court will hear oral arguments in the Earls case later this spring and likely announce its decision by the end of June.

M.D.S.

Should schools allow the sale of junk food?

MARGARET JOHNSON, ***aka Mrs. J., is in her fifth year teaching English and French at West Las Vegas High School, Las Vegas, New Mexico. She served in the Army Signal Corps in Germany and taught college English before switching to high school.***

yes

Yes, junk food should be sold in schools—along with other food. Students will buy anything that costs under a dollar, is portable, flavorful, visually appealing, and gives them a quick pick-me-up. They like traditional candy bars, nutrition bars, pickles, lemons, sodas, fruit drinks, and water. I'm sure milk would be a top seller. Above all, students like freedom of choice.

Students often do not recognize cafeteria fare as food. The nutritionally correct meal in the garbage can has no nutritional value. Our politically correct cafeteria offers a wide variety of meals, all as well prepared as regulations and mass production allow. The bread is made on site.

But some students will not eat tomatoes, meats, spices, or other ingredients. Others cannot deal with the noise, long lines, and short lunch periods. Some don't have time to get seconds.

Junk food provides quick energy, substitutes for missed meals, and supplements inadequate meals.

My learned colleague in biology says teens need munchies to keep them alert. I found this to be accurate when I grounded classes for not disposing of their trash properly. Without snacks, those who weren't antsy were asleep. Most were not focused.

I do not claim any medical expertise, but I am a teacher and a mother, and I have observed that caffeine is, for some, a better drug for hyperactivity than what is sold at the pharmacy, and a cola can help the student whose pharmaceutical wears off at noon. A school that bans colas and candy can cause a medical hardship. Also, denial, even for as short a time as a school day, can cause bingeing.

On the economic side, junk food can provide a steady income for school organizations at a better price and profit margin than the fund-raiser companies offer. Recycling cans is a profitable byproduct.

I do worry about where students get so much disposable income, but that is a matter for their parents to monitor.

Yes, we should teach and model good eating habits. Yes, we have health problems brought on by poor nutrition. But no, we should not ban junk food. Our schools are restrictive enough as it is. They do not need to resemble prisons any more than they do already. ✔

JUDY STEWART, ***wearing her milk moustache, is known to all as Nurse Judy and has been a school nurse for 18 years, the last five in the Hemingford public schools, Hemingford, Nebraska. She was the Nebraska School Nurse of the Year in 1999.***

no

Junk food should not be sold in schools. We teach students good nutrition and then sell them junk food—what a double message!

Childhood obesity and its consequences are of epidemic proportion. Dentists are seeing massive tooth decay in the mouths of young adults, which they attribute to increased consumption of pop. Osteoporosis is a growing concern in the aging population, and this problem is effectively solved only during the teenage years.

How do we deal with poor nutrition? In two words, "Got Milk?" Get a milk vending machine. Children will choose milk if they can. Once they feel the positive health effects, they will keep choosing milk over pop.

At Hemingford High School, we bought a milk machine with support from the Nebraska Dairy Council and the phone company.

We have seven flavors: regular white, chocolate, fat-free chocolate, strawberry, banana, French vanilla, and cafe mocha. We sell 200 to 300 bottles a week.

Students were a driving force behind this.

As the school nurse, I took the opportunity to teach about the importance of calcium intake during the growing years. After about the age of 18, kids are done building bone mass and only maintain what they have.

Some argue that junk food sales support school activities. Well, student health is more important than making money. Had any dental work done lately? Costly! Osteoporosis is even more expensive, especially when you consider the bone fractures.

When kids refuse to eat cafeteria food, its because they're used to junk food. If we stop vending junk food and teach good nutrition, they will begin to appreciate nutritionally sound cafeteria meals.

The trick is to have them learn to eat the food that is served. This can be accomplished by making school lunch fun!

The other component is parents. With our busy lifestyles, our society has focused on "fast food." Parents can make meatloaf and potatoes look as appealing as hamburgers and fries. Let's help parents learn to feed their kids a healthy meal, sit down together, and then shoo them out to play!

Do teens need a sugar pick-me-up? Not if they eat according to the Food Pyramid. Let's guide them to life-long healthy eating habits! ✔

What's Your Opinion?

Should schools allow the sale of junk food?
To vote, visit our Web site at www.nea.org/neatoday and see the results instantly.

Should teachers have the authority to remove disruptive students from their classes?
The tally on this Debate question from the January issue of *NEA Today:*
34% Yes **66% No**

Is zero tolerance a good idea for school discipline and safety?
The tally on this Debate question from the last issue of *NEA Today:*
65% Yes **35% No**

Learning

'Do you want to move?'

An educator who won't give up finds new ways to help disabled children.

Dave Schreude

Linda Bidabe began by following advice teachers usually give to others: "Never be afraid to ask a silly question."

In the 1980s, the special education teacher and NEA member started asking severely physically disabled children, "Would you like to be able to stand?"

Today she heads a worldwide, nonprofit network of educators, caregivers, and clients—children and adults—who have found hope in a curriculum called MOVE (Mobility Opportunities Via Education).

Bidabe brings a whole array of beliefs, equipment and activities to bear on problems she says others assumed were intractable.

Practitioners—thousands have been trained, Bidabe says—ask patients: "What do you most want to be able to do?" For Bidabe, answers from two disabled individuals quickly come to mind. A policeman who'd been shot in the head wanted most to be able to take himself to the bathroom. A little girl longed to get a beer from the refrigerator for her father. Both succeeded.

MOVE "encourages people to take steps that seem outlandish, but are really part of your heart," says the longtime, Bakersfield, California resident, with a twang that betrays her Kansas farm childhood.

Bidabe's ideas challenged traditional thinking, but they worked. Not only did the children she worked with begin to gain independence, they grew communicative and suffered fewer life-threatening illnesses, Bidabe says.

Of the increased communication, she adds, "I still don't know how that works. Get them up and get them moving, and communication improves."

Today, MOVE programs are operating across the United States and in 26 countries. Bidabe's curriculum is published in 12 languages.

The "mobile stander" machines she first built for disabled children, using duct tape, broom handles, walkers and cloth, have been updated by a New Jersey manufacturer. The "gait trainers" are "sleek and pretty now."

Bidabe occasionally encounters resistance. Some physical therapists feel she's intruding. Soon, though, "they understand we're helping."

Some have criticized her method as too labor-intensive. "Well," she replies, "it is a lot of work.

For More: Call 800/397-MOVE (6683), or visit www.move-international.org. Read her memoir, *No Ordinary Move*, $24 from Plough Publishing at www.lindabidabe.com or 800/521-8011.

NCTM

Closing the Achievement Gap

Study after study shows that minority students lag behind their white peers in mathematics. Lee Stiff, head of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, is working to close the gap.

Why has the gap closed between girls and boys but not between minority and white students?

When teachers are given a chance to see how they interact in the classroom, they see that they have treated girls differently from boys. They are willing to change. Disparities along racial or ethnic lines are more sensitive. There is a tendency to say those don't exist.

It's not that the teacher intends to harm the students, but we need to be willing to see the differences when it comes to race.

Society values these children less. They are more likely to get teachers who are less prepared to teach them.

How can we eliminate the gap?

Recognize that there is one—and that it may be caused by something we are doing.

Don't blame the students. Put qualified teachers in front of these kids.

What can individual educators do?

They need to make sure they are attending to the needs of their students.

You don't find teachers who don't want kids to do well. The problem is the system wants those kids to be successful effortlessly.

We have a cultural attitude that some kids can't do math. A lot of kids can understand the fundamentals. They may not become mathematicians, but they can have great success in math.

For More: Visit www.nctm.org.

Getting Guys To Read

For a guy who prides himself on being silly, **Jon Scieszka**—creator of *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairy Stupid Tales*, *Math Curse* and the *Time Warp Trio* series to name a few—is quite serious about encouraging boys to read.

"I write my books to reach the boys in the back of the classroom, the ones who aren't too fired up on reading," says the former New York elementary school teacher.

If there is a lesson he's learned from his success, it's that boys need special attention when it comes to reading.

Literacy statistics, too, show "that we are not giving boys what they need to be successful readers," he says.

That's why Scieszka recently started Guys Read, a literacy program focused on the needs of boys, offering parents, educators, and librarians concrete ways to engage boys in reading.

"I think anyone who teaches boys or has a son can attest to the fact that reading is often difficult for boys to master," he says.

One suggestion for turning this trend around: Encourage boys to read the books they want to read rather than the ones we want them to read.

"When my own son was younger, I watched him struggle through reading *Little House on the Prairie* for school," says Scieszka, who grew up with five brothers. "He and his friends just hated it.

"That's not because it's a bad book, it's because girls are much quicker to develop an emotional connection to fiction."

"Boys," he adds, "tend to like books that have humor, short chapters, cliffhanger endings and some funny or slightly gross things that make them feel what they're reading is a bit subversive. Once they are hooked that way, it's easy moving them into more sophisticated stories."

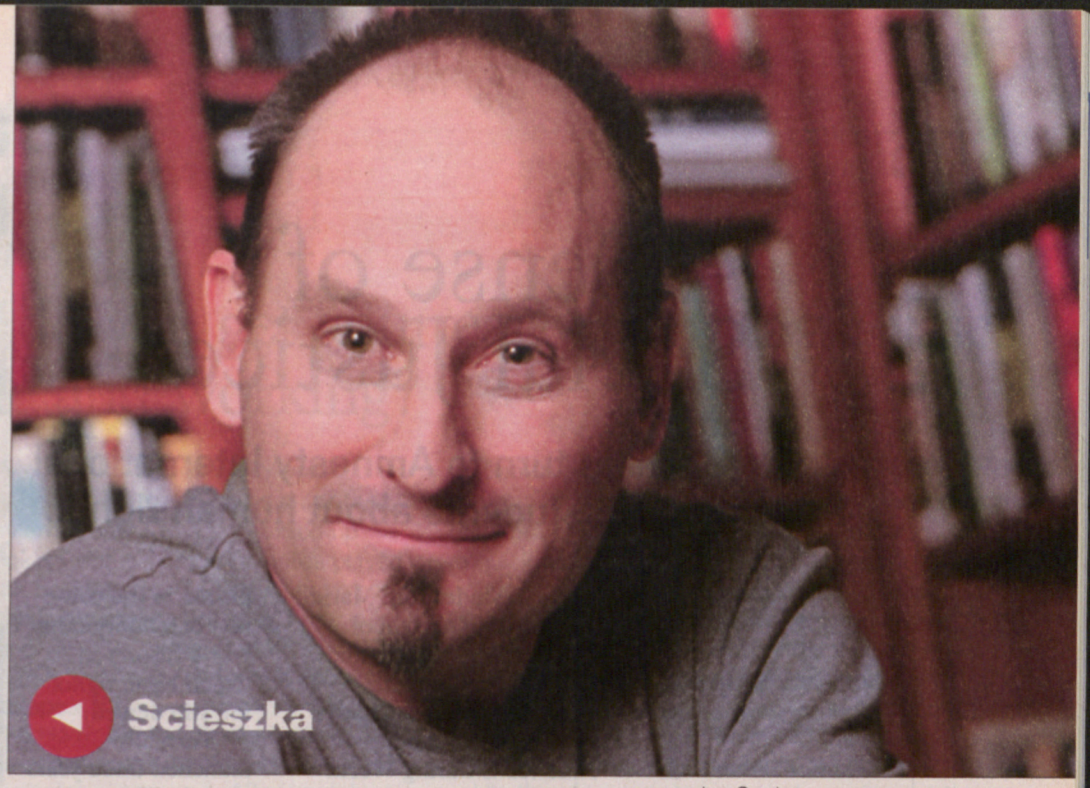
Guys Read also calls for more men to stand up as role models.

"When I was a teacher, I was pretty much the only guy teaching in the lower elementary grades," he says. "Most teachers and librarians who promote reading are women, which gives boys the idea that reading is not masculine."

Providing a list of guy-approved books for boys and their parents and teachers is just one of the many aspects of Guys Read. Through its Web site, people can share ideas, review books, and subscribe to a monthly update newsletter.

"Guys Read is one more source of information to reach struggling readers," he says. "I hope it will help guys see the joys in reading."

For More: Visit www.guysread.com.



Leo Sorel

Erin Hodges

Teaching Kids By Day, Parents By Night

Everyone knows it's good to involve parents in education. Usually, that means getting parents to help their children. But NEA member **Virginia Collins** is putting a new twist on parent involvement. She and colleague Terry Soto teach the same computer skills to parents and children—kids by day and parents at night—at the Sierra Middle School in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

"The kids can see how hard their parents are working, and it makes them work harder. They refuse to be left behind," says Collins.

The project is supported by a grant from the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE). The students use computers to enhance portfolios presented at the end of eighth grade to an audience of parents, administrators, and peers. Traditionally, these portfolios have consisted of notebooks and posters. But now, students are eager to use computers to create more impressive presentations.

Collins says the computer skills will help both students and parents compete in the world of work.

For More: E-Mail Collins at vcollins@lcps.k12.nm.us. For information about NFIE grants, visit www.nfie.org or call 202/822-7840.

The Five-Minute Lobbyist

Say you're a regular education teacher struggling to help your special education students, and you need more help. But there's no money to hire special education experts, because Congress has never lived up to its commitment to pay the extra costs of the IDEA law. You'd like to give your representatives in Congress a piece of your mind, but who has time?

Thanks to NEA's cyber-lobbying operation, run by Web wizards Stephanie Baccala and Phyzell Roland, you can do it in five minutes or less. Here's how:

Go to www.nea.org/lac (the Legislative Action Center of the NEA Web site). Select "E-Mail Congress" on the left of the screen. You'll be guided to type in your zip code and find your member of Congress or senator, and you can write him or her a letter.

If you pick one of the current topics, you'll see background information and even draft paragraphs that you can use or change in any way you want.

Be sure to put in your name and address where they are called for because many Congressional offices automatically delete messages that aren't from constituents.

You can also join NEA's cyber-lobbyist team—90,000 strong and growing every day—to receive weekly updates on current education issues before Congress and push for action that will help educators and their students.

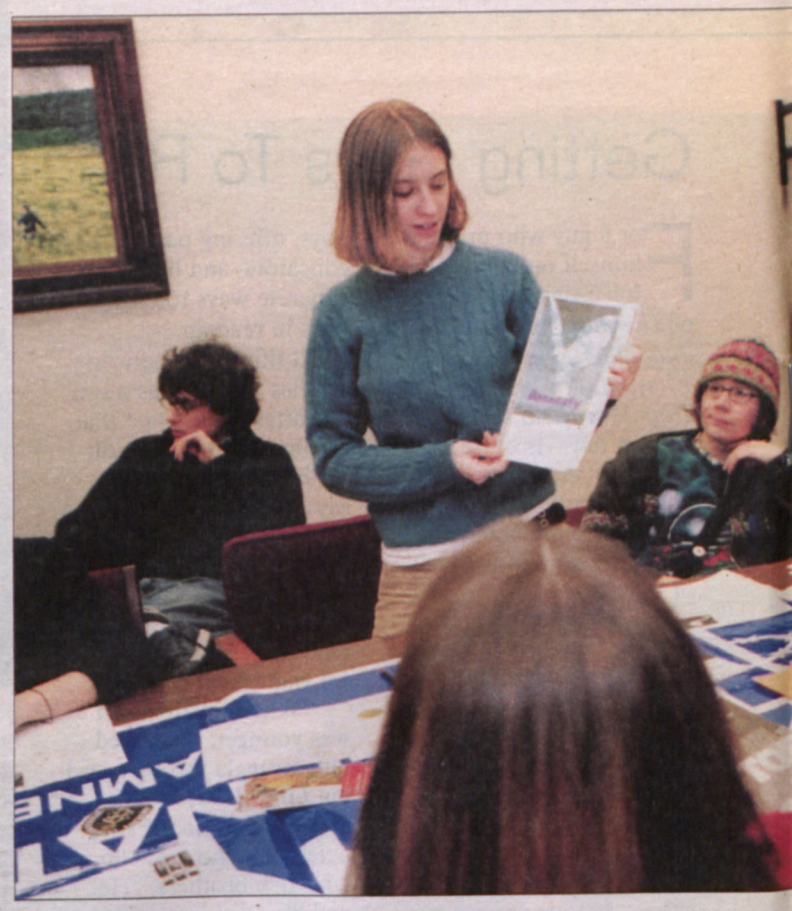
NEA also coordinates its work with many state affiliates that have their own cyber-lobbying efforts.

Cyber-lobbyists do a lot more than blow off steam. "NEA members sent tens of thousands of messages to Congress during the fight over the new Elementary and Secondary Education Act. As a result, the final version is enormously better than it started out," says Diane Shust, NEA director of Government Relations.

For More: Visit www.nea.org/lac.

A Sense of Social Justice

Teachers turn to Amnesty International to teach students about human rights.



This year, students in Marie Ambrose's high school English class have studied writings on the Nazi Holocaust and the U.S. internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. They've also tackled material on more recent human rights abuses, from "ethnic cleansing" campaigns to the plight of political prisoners around the world.

Ambrose, who teaches at Wyoming Valley West High School in Plymouth, Pennsylvania, believes a knowledge of contemporary world culture is essential to students' understanding of historical literature. So she decided to participate in the Human Rights Education Program developed by Amnesty International, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning nonprofit organization dedicated to ending human rights abuses around the world.

"The Holocaust and the internment will always retain their tragic enormity," says Ambrose. "But they become more vivid to today's students when they're removed from the vacuum of the past and placed in the context of a continuing world history in which basic rights are still denied."

Formally launched three years ago, the Human Rights Education Program supports the belief that students learn culture-related subjects better if they have a broader view of the world and its people. The program—which more than 4,000 K-12 and college educators have signed up for—offers training seminars for teachers in human rights and develops teaching materials geared to different age groups.

"It fills my well. I love it when I see kids minds opening up, asking questions."

—Jennifer Bishop

"Amnesty International doesn't try to politicize any teacher's curriculum," says Karen Robinson, director of the Human Rights Education Program. We provide education about the state of human rights in the world today."

Robinson points out that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United Nations adopted in 1948, already is required public school reading in some parts of the United States.

Jennifer Bishop, a program participant and social studies teacher at Hinsdale South High School in Darien, Illinois, believes that contemporary human rights issues are an essential component of her curriculum.

"Look how quickly the questions came from students after the tragedy of September 11," says Bishop. "If we were teaching American history or government with blinders on, it stopped there. The dialogue had to expand to include the world around us, and indeed, it has promoted an amazing dialogue in my classes about terrorism and human rights."

Bishop says teaching human rights is a particularly valuable tool in social studies.

Idea Exchange

Make-Up Work Solution

I never had a good system for distributing work for absent students. So I devised a make-up work cover sheet that lists the day's assignments and any labs or activities. Each morning, I write the day's information on the sheet and photocopy it. When a student is absent, I write his/her name on the cover sheet, staple to it any papers handed out that day, and place the packet of papers into a file on the wall. Students know to look for their packets if they have been absent. The packets also are great for parents who pick up work for their children.

Gretchen Rohrs
Columbia, Missouri

Challenge Board

To challenge my advanced students without frustrating the students who are struggling, I developed a challenge board. Every day I post at least one math/logic problem and a one-word riddle. I collect these from books and also allow the students to develop their own challenge problems. I always review the problems and make sure they are appropriate for fourth graders. If the problem isn't solved within a week, I post the answer with an explanation. It not only encourages higher-level thinking, but also helps out with classroom management.

Brian Stevens
Conway, Pennsylvania

Colored Circles

When working with groups, I keep the noise level under control by using colored circles. If a group is on task and using quiet voices, I give them a green circle. If I need to remind them about the noise level, I give them a yellow circle. If a group is way off task, I give them a red circle and step in to give them assistance. This is a great way to model appropriate behavior when I am just beginning to establish groups and ground rules. It also saves time because I don't have to interrupt the entire class to get one group back on track.

Elaine Wargo
Perry, Ohio

Works 4 Me
nea's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

Have a great idea? You can pass along your tip to *NEA Today*'s 2.6 million readers in one of five ways:

- By mail: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036
- By phone: 202/822-7201
- By fax: 202/822-7206
- By E-mail: Ideas@neatoday.nea.org
- Through the Web: www.nea.org/neatoday

Photos by Linda Morgan

Teacher Marie Ambrose supervises a meeting of the Wyoming Valley West chapter of Amnesty International.

"First of all, you're teaching historical fact. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a historical document, as appropriate to teach as the Magna Carta. Second, human rights is a tremendous organizing theme. You can't teach American history without teaching slavery, the plight of Native Americans, or women's rights. And those can't be treated as footnotes.

"If you organize your teaching around the theme of human rights, all of history begins to resonate for students," Bishop notes. "You can make unlimited historical connections when human rights is used as a common thread."

Ambrose and Bishop also serve as faculty sponsors of Amnesty International clubs at their respective schools. Ambrose's students are learning about Jose Francisco Gallardo, a Mexican general imprisoned for advocating a military ombudsman to oversee reported human rights violations by the Mexican armed forces. The students have been invited to help teach Gallardo's story to the Spanish class, Ambrose says.

Bishop says teaching human rights has fulfilled her dreams of what she wanted to achieve as a teacher.

"It fills my well," says Bishop. "I love it when I see kids' minds opening up, asking questions. Students have a strong sense of social justice, and I think they react more strongly to injustice. By doing what I'm doing, I'm able to see individual students becoming citizens of the world." ✔

—Matt Simon

For more: E-mail Karen Robinson at krobinson@aiusa.org or phone Amnesty International at 212/807-8400.

[DILEMMA]

How do you get your early morning classes awake and working?

I use my "Morning Movements" to wake up the sleepy heads. As my students enter the room, they are greeted to some jazzed up "Hokey Pokey" and other old favorites played softly in the background. Once they have settled and the announcements are over, I crank up the volume and we "jive to the music." For 15 minutes we listen and follow directions on various CDs and tapes. If I notice someone not involved, I take his or her hands and we jive together. This activity gets the blood flowing and some of the wiggles out as well. Afterward, I read our daily book and I involve the students in the story through role-playing.

Donna Welch Rankin
Elementary teacher
Panama City, Florida

■ My classes often depend on how energetic I am. If I come in beat and dead to the world, so will my students. My morning classes are really charged up, because I am charged up and ready to go to work. Students will follow their leader. If you do this from class day one and continue to show the same energy every day, your students will expect it every time and would even demand it. My classes have become very interesting because everyone in the class, including myself, is highly charged and ready to tackle the day's work. Try it! Keeping a highly charged and motivated classroom is infectious.

Victor Garcia
High school Spanish teacher
New Bern, North Carolina

■ To get my Spanish classes going in the morning we usually begin with oral conversation. We go around the room asking questions and practicing appropriate responses. After I model questions, students ask their own and call on different classmates. When we are doing grammar and students begin nodding off, we take a break and sing, do the chicken dance, play "Simon Says," do relay races, or have a scavenger hunt (all in the target language).

Marjorie Rios
Spanish teacher
Livingston, Tennessee

■ I have extremely sleepy first- and second-period language arts classes. I have tried many tactics, but one of the students' favorites is to play a quick game of "Simon Says." I go through the motions at double time so students have to engage their minds to follow the commands. Also, with the speedy commands, multiple motions take only a few short seconds. I am extremely strict with the rules, so even if students flinch, they could be out of the game. The competition motivates students to participate while they focus on hearing and carrying out the correct command. After the game the students seem more alert. This is a fun wake-up activity for both students and teacher and it steals only a few minutes from the class time.

Elizabeth Petroelje Stolle
Eighth grade language arts teacher
Naperville, Illinois

■ To begin the morning we start the day by doing our calendar routine. This time period includes the 100 chart and several other activities. The helper of the day chooses two different ways to count using the 100 chart and a pointer stick. They can count by ones, twos, fives, tens, or whatever they like. The students and myself all count together while jogging, jumping, skipping, hopping, squatting, or doing any other quick exercises. This seems to get the blood flowing and warm all of us up in the morning.

Tara D. Reed
English immersion teacher
Escondido, California

Ted Pitts

Got an Answer?

What do you do if a student has a crush on you?

E-mail your answer to dilemma2@list.nea.org. Or send by regular mail, or fax to 202/822-7206. Include your name, city, state, and job title. Published respondents will receive an *NEA Today* mug!

"Real teachers. . .inform store management when handwritten signs have spelling errors."

—Ellen McCormack, junior high technology teacher, Brockton, Massachusetts

Learning

Teaching Kids by Educating Parents

A California literacy program trains parents to help their children read.

Bea Fernandez (center) of San Diego's Parent University helps train parents to read aloud daily to their children.

It's Tuesday night in San Diego, California, and after a hard day's work, a crowd of tired but dedicated parents boards a group of buses. Instead of taking them home, the buses head to a small downtown campus that by day serves elementary students, and by night helps parents eager to play a part in their children's education. When they reach their destination, parents drop off their babies and children at nearby classrooms and step into an evening of lessons.

Photos by Paul Body

Welcome to Parent University, a school community project helping children and parents from the city's poorest schools.

"The project is designed around literacy, because we know parents who read help their children succeed," explains NEA member Bea Fernandez, a Parent University coordinator. "And without the skills or the books to help them reinforce their children's learning, these parents can be just as lost as their children."

Parent University offers parents from these Title 1 schools guidance in reading aloud to their children, help in identifying books to read, and activities to do at home.

At the same time, the children in the program's child care and evening classrooms get help with their reading.

"We have trained aides and teachers reading to the children, helping them with homework, and leading activities," says Fernandez. "Even the babies and toddlers get into it because we have a very fun read-aloud every evening."

The classes run Tuesday and Thursday nights for eight-week sessions, and parents learn a variety of techniques to try at home.

"More than 200 parents take part now—a big increase from when the program began three years ago," says Fernandez. "Many of these are Hispanic parents, some of whom are intimidated by our schools. This is a tremendous commitment for them and indicates their desire to help their children."

In return, Parent University offers the parents access to a dedicated group of teachers, skilled in helping parents as well as children and committed to the literacy program.

"Parents aren't the only ones learning valuable lessons," adds Fernandez. "For some of the teachers, Parent University has been an education as well, teaching them about the lives outside of their classroom doors and adding insight and greater sensitivity to their teaching."

One special treat: A home library, given to four lucky parents at the end of each session. "We can't talk about reading to children at home if you don't have any books," says Fernandez. "We paired with the San Diego Literacy Foundation to collect the books, and it's wonderful to be able to give them."

"We're seeing more and more parents involved in education even beyond the reading," says Fernandez. "And the children are truly reaping the benefit of seeing their parents as role models of good reading behavior. It's truly a win-win situation."

Do the Cat Proud, Celebrate Now!

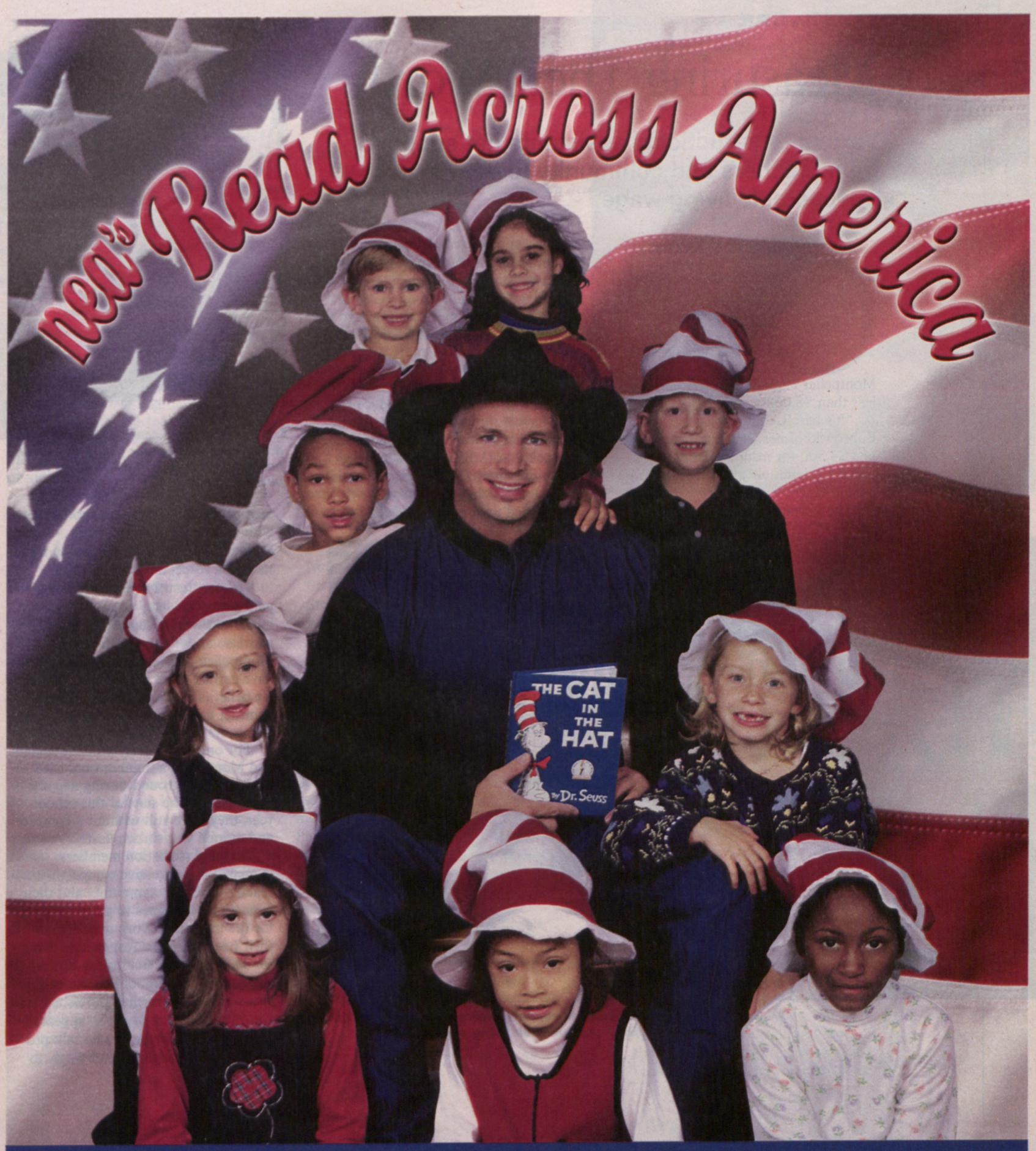
March 1 is this year's official NEA's Read Across America day, but the Seussational celebration continues long after Dr. Seuss' birthday. Find out what's happening around the country to celebrate reading, and check out the year-round literacy calendar and activity list to see what you can do after March 1 as part of NEA's year-round commitment to Read Across America. Don't forget there are plenty of reading resources available on the Read Across Web site: www.nea.org/readacross, including spanish-language resources, booklists and more.

The Cat in the Hat & Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P. 1957, 1997 All Rights Reserved.

HOW TO... GET PARENTS INVOLVED

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, children who are read to at home have a higher success rate at school. Yet only 53 percent of children ages three to five are read to daily by a family member, and children in poor families are even less likely to be read to aloud every day. That's why programs like the Parent University are so important. What can you do for parents who want to advance literacy at home? Here are a few tips:

- Start with family reading nights. Getting parents to enjoy a family reading activity just might get them hooked on reading every night.
- Offer parents resources and materials they can use at home. Books that can be sent home and activities a child and parent can do together are great ways to get started.
- Let parents know that there are different ways to engage their children in reading. Create activities such as recognizing words in stores, reading recipes, looking for words in newspapers, asking about stories and characters, and writing and drawing projects.
- Always respect the parents, their needs, and their circumstances. Let them know what you can do to help, and offer other contacts and resources.
- Set up book-fairs, author visits—even presentations by other parents and parent coordinators—to make the experience as fun and educational for the parent as for the child.



Garth Brooks — proud to be an American reader. Join him and millions of readers young and old to read across America on March 1 and everyday.

It's not too late—check our Web site at www.nea.org/readacross.

READ ACROSS AMERICA
AN NEA PROJECT

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
www.nea.org

TEAMWORK

Measuring Their Worth

Vermont instructional assistants get support from teachers and community to earn a 'respectable living wage.'

Cindy Bubrouski has her master's degree in counseling. But up until January, the speech and language instructional assistant at Vermont's Montpelier High School was earning less than $8,000 a year.

"It's barely enough to get by," says Bubrouski of her $12,000 annual salary less $4,500 for insurance premiums. "And it's definitely a challenge to raise a child on."

The Vermont legislature agrees. According to its 1999 cost of living report, a single person with employer-paid benefits would need to earn at least $10.40 per hour just to afford the very basic necessities of life in Vermont — nearly $2 per hour more than the starting salary for Montpelier's college-educated instructional assistants.

"It was a real slap in the face for us," says Bubrouski, president of the Montpelier Educational Support Staff Association (MESSA), which represents the district's instructional assistants and teacher aides.

Armed with the study, MESSA members began contract negotiations with district administrators in November 2000 with one goal in mind: to earn a respectable living wage.

Montpelier ESP leader Cindy Bubrouski headed efforts to win wage hikes for paraeducators.

Photos by Craig Line

Montpelier support professionals worked for a year on their living wage campaign.

"It's not just that we were being paid almost poverty wages for very important work," says Bubrouski. "It was also about equity. For years, Montpelier's custodians and secretaries have earned more than us and had better benefits. We just wanted our new contract to be more equal to our education peers."

For one entire year, MESSA leaders and Montpelier administrators tried to find a middle ground during negotiations. But by the start of this school year, they were still without a contract and morale was sinking fast.

So the Association members launched an aggressive campaign to reach out to the community and their education colleagues to garner support for the important work they do and their need to earn a respectable living.

To do so, they held press conferences, picketed school board meetings, wrote letters to parents, published articles in the local newspaper, appeared on local television and radio talk programs, and voted overwhelmingly to

Going the Extra Mile

Alaska's **Mary Woodbury** sees and helps children every day who stay after school to pursue private goals and dreams. She also sees those who struggle to be in extracurricular activities, often without enough money or parental support. She doesn't just stand around and watch, though. Woodbury is a dedicated staffer who lends a helping hand when she can. That can mean anything from providing emotional support to helping sew prom dresses after school.

It's no wonder that Woodbury, a night custodian with the Delta Greely School District, is making news in Alaska. She has continually committed herself to the students. Through Woodbury's help, one student won state and national design competitions and is now on full scholarship at the Seattle Fine Arts Institute. Because of her hard work and dedication to students, Woodbury was named Alaska's ESP of the Year.

"Mary has always been thorough and conscientious on the job, going the extra mile to train her co-workers, and is always selected to work with the new employees," says Delta Greely ESPA President Jackie Nelson. "She's respected by her supervisors and peers alike and is sought out repeatedly for her expertise."

Weekends are usually dedicated to relaxing, but ESP members in Richmond were hard at work on a quiet Saturday morning recently. Sitting in the Richmond Education Association office, the members were receiving training on several computer programs and learning how technology can help them do their jobs better.

The training came about as a result of the ESP caucus, who had asked its mem-

TEAM PLAYER

Educating Through Interpretation

Name: **Wanda Newman**
Job Title: Education interpreter for hearing-impaired students, Friendly High School, Ft. Washington, Maryland

On ESP and Teachers: I don't like the idea of splitting into teachers and paras. We all play a vital role and are part of the school team. In the classroom, I'm not just communicating with the deaf child, but with the teacher and hearing students as well.

I try to help teachers one-on-one to give them information on how to accommodate deaf and hard-of-hearing students. I tell them that they should try to work with the students using different resources such as overheads or videos with captions.

These students need their eyes to listen to the class, so I'm educating the educator.

Going One Step Further: There are few professional development opportunities for hearing interpreters, so even though I've worked as an interpreter for 20 years, I used an NEA grant to enroll in a distance learning program to further my skills.

I had the opportunity to learn about new methodologies and strategies. We also learned how people go about learning a first language, and then how they use their skills to learn a second language. This was especially fascinating to me, as American Sign Language is my second language.

There are only five full-time interpreters for the county, so we get some people from outside agencies. Many don't have experience in interpreting for education and some have just begun their careers.

By mentoring them, I am able to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and to help them do their job better. I lead by example, so I constantly attend workshops to stay on top of changes in the profession.

After hours: I'm a member of the National Association of the Deaf, Inc., the National Black Deaf Advocates, and the National Alliance of Black Interpreters. I'm also the president of my granddaughter's Home School Parent Association. ✔

Lisa Helfert

strike—scheduled for the last week in January.

Their comprehensive campaign quickly caught the attention of other local union members, including Montpelier's teachers, who organized a petition drive in support of the instructional assistants and wrote letters of their own to parents and local media.

Carolyn Kiniry, president of the Montpelier Education Association, says there was no question that the teachers would become involved: "In order to deliver quality education to kids, teamwork is vital," says the health teacher at Main Street Middle School. "We wouldn't want to do our jobs without the instructional assistants and aides."

In early January, with their strike-date looming, the instructional assistants received a two-year contract they were comfortable with. It includes a 60-cent-an-hour retroactive raise this year and a nearly 6 percent salary increase by next January. It also cuts their out-of-pocket health insurance costs by 25 percent. They also secured a one-time bonus for instructional assistants and aides employed for three or more years.

"We proved that earning a livable wage isn't just a slogan," says Bubrouski. "With the help of the teachers and the support of our community, we're closer to actually achieving a livable wage and getting the respect we deserve." ✔

—Dina S. Gómez

bers in the fall what they needed most, and computer training had come out on top.

ESP caucus chair Muriel Wimberly arranged for the computer courses and said that the two sessions would be repeated as long as it took to accommodate everyone.

ESP members in Richmond were eager to learn about how they could do their jobs better through technology.

The REA office also got a computer designated for ESP members to use through a $3,000 NEA technology grant. ESP members will also have ready access to the Internet so they can communicate with others around the state.

The REA believes that learning to use computers not only enables ESP to reach out to more people, but it gives them a whole new set of skills. Through training and with the help of the technology grant, ESP members in Richmond were able to do both successfully.

RESOURCES

Effective Communication Through Technology

At the ESP Professional Development Summit in October, support professionals in Washington state got firsthand experience with Group Interactive Feedback Technology (GIFT), a new technology that allows instant responses from a whole group of people and gives them feedback on what the response was.

Questions were displayed and people responded on a wireless touch pad. The responses were electronically compiled and then displayed graphically back on the screen.

Through this, the ESP ACT team was able to find out what ESP members want and need.

Call the Technology Leadership Group at 800/621-9785 or go to their Web site, www.theltgroup. com, to find out more about Group Interactive Feedback Technology and how you can use it in your area.

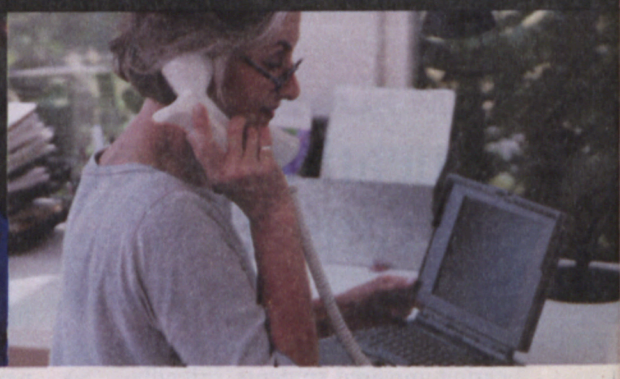
NEA's Link to Support Professionals

An effective resource for ESP members across the country is actually on the NEA's Web site.

The site, www.nea.org/esp, has an E-mail discussion list that you can join to find out the latest in ESP news from fellow members.

You'll also find both news and resources sections that relate information about current events and publications released regarding ESP news.

NEA VALUEBUILDER • INVESTMENT VALUE FOR NEA MEMBERS



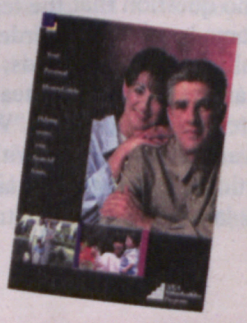
"I haven't saved for retirement and now I'm afraid it's too late."

It's never too late to start taking control of your retirement planning.

When you meet with an NEA Valuebuilder® Representative, we can help you take advantage of all your retirement opportunities:

- Build a customized financial plan and help you set specific retirement objectives
- Help you understand how the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 can enhance your ability to save for your retirement
- Determine your eligibility for special "catch-up" options that allow you to increase your pre-tax contributions
- Match the right NEA Valuebuilder investments with your specific time horizon
- Make use of the only NEA-endorsed retirement program available – NEA Valuebuilder

Are you searching for financial peace of mind? Let us help you achieve it.



You'll receive a complimentary copy of our MoneyGuide for members.

Call your NEA Valuebuilder Financial Counselor

toll free to personally take you through the investment process.

1-877-NEA8668 ext 3655

NEA Valuebuilder® Program

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

The Security Benefit Group of Companies

Security Distributors, Inc. a member of the Security Benefit Group of Companies.

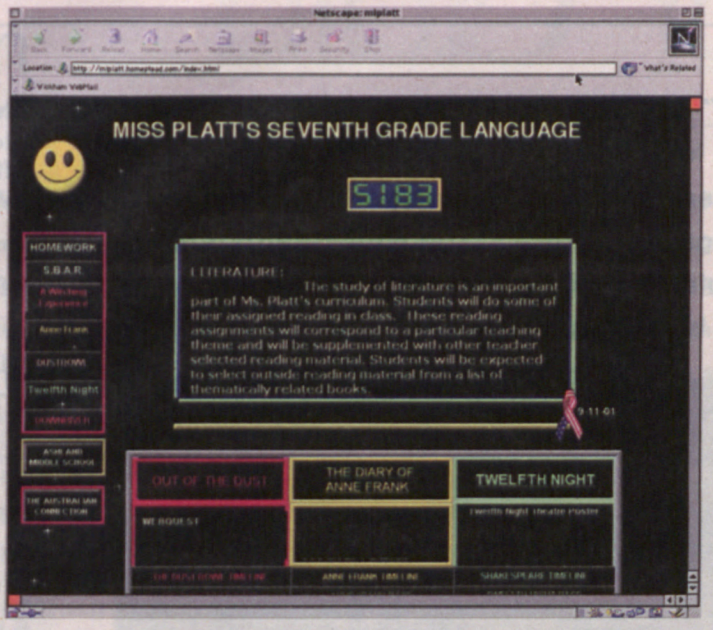
For more complete information about the NEA Valuebuilder Variable Annuity TSA available through the NEA Valuebuilder Program, including all charges and expenses, obtain a prospectus from Security Distributors, Inc. and read it carefully before investing. Variable annuities available through the NEA Valuebuilder Program are distributed by Security Distributors, Inc. and issued by Security Benefit Life Insurance Company. The NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund TSA, a Custodial Account under §403(b)(7) of the Internal Revenue Code and the NEA Valuebuilder Mutual Fund 457, a Trust Account under §457(g) of the Internal Revenue Code, make available various mutual funds for investment. For more complete information about the mutual funds in which the Custodial Account or Trust Account invests, obtain a prospectus from Security Distributors, Inc. and read it carefully before investing.

VBNT0302

Emphasis on Interactive Learning

I have a seventh grade Web page that links to my eighth grade Web page. Both sites are centered around project-based teaching, including interactive spelling/vocabulary games created on Quia and Funbrain, interactive games, novel units, and a homework calendar.

Maryann Platt
Seventh and eighth grade teacher
Ashland, Massachusetts


Netscape: mlplatt
MISS PLATT'S SEVENTH GRADE LANGUAGE
5183
HOMEWORK
S.S.S.R.
LITERATURE:
The study of literature is an important part of Ms. Platt's curriculum. Students will do some of their assigned reading in class. These reading assignments will correspond to a particular teaching theme and will be supplemented with other teacher selected reading material. Students will be expected to select outside reading material from a list of thematically related books.
OUT OF THE DUST
THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK
TWELFTH NIGHT

Maryann Platt's students are fans of http://mlplatt.homestead.com/index.html.

World Travelers

Our students used the profusion.com search engine to do research for the CD-ROM map program they were using to publish a travel brochure on the country of the student's choice. Profusion searches for topics among sites that are "screened" for graphics and information.

Each child was able to visit the country they were researching through their search, find flags, hear the anthems, and see landmarks important to that country. They could print out the historical information to incorporate into their final product.

Claire Fleisch
Fifth grade teacher/technology lead
Falls Church, Virginia

Persuasion Power

I have a classroom site that is basically my own domain— www.millionpickles.com. Through this site my students view the homework and student writing samples, and as well access a webquest I designed entitled "Is Revenge Ever Justified?" Because there are no computers in class, the students pair off and use their home computers to complete the assignment, which culminates in either a handwritten persuasive essay or a PowerPoint presentation persuading the audience to their point of view.

Andrea Kittelson
Seventh and eighth grade teacher
Hayward, California

Inspiring Site

Kidspiration and Inspiration are two similar software programs that enable students to make excellent story-webs and outlines from the webs (and vice versa).

Color-coding can be used, pictures can be added, and sample webs are available for many school topics. Teachers can make use of the webs, too, and use them for worksheets, brainstorming, discussions, and even testing. As I stated before, these webs convert to outlines, with just a mouse click!

Debby Rubin
Speech pathologist
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Car Hunting

When teaching about search engines and how to use them in beginning I.T. classes, I have my high school students do a search for their favorite vehicle(s) and ask them for the price(s).

They learn quickly about how to search different geographical areas and how to limit their search to particular colors, makes, and models of cars. They then have to send a photo or description and price to me on the Internet, or print it out.

The first time I gave this assignment, it was a surprise to find out how motivated they were to share their choice of car, truck, etc.

They freely exchanged information about the latest search tools and techniques, but they haven't duplicated another student's choice yet, in 13 years of classes.

I've received information on expensive foreign cars, Volkswagens, four-wheel-drive trucks, and some great classic cars.

Aleta Boyce
Art teacher
Tooele, Utah

Seating Software

I love the program Inspiration, which is useful for creating webs in your classroom of all types. But my favorite use of this software is for arranging seating in my room.

At the beginning of the year, I create a "desk" for each student. Each time I want to rearrange the desks, I go to this file and move the desks around. My printed copy is useful for substitutes.

I serve as my elementary school's Webmaster. I have developed a site that provides links to authors, mailboxes to reach teachers, and links for parents, teachers, and students. Check it out at www.framingham.k12.ma.us/dunning.

Carol Gabel Berlin
Third grade teacher
Framingham, Massachusetts

My favorite Web site

My favorite Web site is actually the one I created: www.teachingtips.com. The site provides a multitude of resources for teachers including helpful articles and a discussion board to get advice from other teachers.

Anna Gregory
Albany, Kentucky

TALK TO US

Have a nifty classroom tip or lesson plan that uses technology? E-mail a description (under 200 words, please!) to wiredclassroom@list.nea.org.

Is there a Web site, CD-ROM, or piece of software you can't live without? E-mail your favorites—and why you love them—to myfavoritetech@list.nea.org.

Or send your responses by regular mail to *NEA Today*, or by fax to 202/822-7206, or through the Web at www.nea.org/cet.

Those published here will receive a sparkling *NEA Today* mug!

Bytes for Beginners

I'm a technology coordinator at my school. We require our students to access certain Web sites using Netscape Communicator. The biggest problem teachers report is keeping their students' focus on the Web site and away from browser menus (bookmarks, toolbars, etc.).
Is there a way to make these menu options disappear when my students run Netscape?

You bet your kiosk there is! Perhaps the best method I've seen used to resolve the dilemma you describe is to actually create "shortcut" icons for each URL you want to access without browser menu options. This procedure works with the latest versions of Netscape (6.2) and MS Explorer (Ver. 6).

First, use your right mouse button to find and click on an empty spot on your Windows desktop. Scroll the pop-up menu and select NEW and then SHORTCUT.

Once the CREATE SHORTCUT dialog box opens, select BROWSE. On your computer's hard drive (or network) locate and double-click on the browser program with which you surf the Web. Either can usually be found in the PROGRAM FILES folder.

The CREATE SHORTCUT dialog box should show a highlighted line of text similar to the following (I chose Netscape as my browser program):

"C:\Program Files\Netscape\Communicator\Program\netscape.exe"

Next, click at the end AFTER the last quotation mark and insert a SPACE. Insert a minus symbol (-) and a lower case k (DO NOT insert a space between these two characters).

Finally, after -k, insert another space and type the URL that you want to open when the browser opens. If you were using Netscape and wanted it to open in kiosk mode at NEA's Web site, your CREATE SHORTCUT dialog box would contain a line similar to the following: "C:\Program Files\Netscape\Communicator\Program\netscape.exe" -k www.nea.org

Now, click on the CREATE SHORTCUT dialog box's NEXT icon and name your shortcut.

The Hazards of Ecstasy

MDMA, often called "Ecstasy," is a drug that creates a sensation of closeness, but which at high levels of ingestion can become toxic—sometimes causing death. Use of Ecstasy is on the rise, especially among students in grades eight through 12. The NEA Health Information Network talked to Cardwell Nuckols, an author and authority on drug abuse, to learn about Ecstasy and how to help keep young people drug-free.

What is Ecstasy?

Ecstasy or MDMA (methylenedioxymethamphetamine) is a stimulant drug that has both the effects of methamphetamine ("speed") and mescaline (a hallucinogenic drug found in certain mushrooms). MDMA is often described as a designer drug that has a similar chemical structure to methamphetamine. MDMA is illegal, and classified as a Schedule I Controlled Substance. Known on the street as Adam, XTC, Clarity, Lovers Speed, Eve, and X, Ecstasy is typically packaged in tablet, capsule, or powder form and is taken orally. Often the drug is made to look like a prescription drug in capsule or tablet form. Ecstasy tablets are often imprinted with logos to make them more appealing to the user. The typical street price is anywhere from $20 to more than $30 per pill.

Matthew Baek

Who uses Ecstasy?

The typical user is a high school, college student, or young adult, although there is evidence of use in the preteen population. MDMA is known as a "club drug" because it was once used largely at all-night dance parties and clubs called "raves" or "trances." Unfortunately, its use has expanded to include home parties and small gatherings. In 2000, a study by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) found that 3.1percent of eighth-graders, 5.4 percent of 10th-graders and 8.2 percent of 12th-graders have used the drug.

What are Ecstasy's effects?

An Ecstasy high can last anywhere from six to 24 hours. Users report that the drug causes euphoria, feelings of well-being, enhanced emotional and mental clarity, increased energy, heightened sensitivity to touch, and enhanced sexuality.

At high doses MDMA can cause hallucinations, sensations of lightness and floating, depression, paranoia, and irrational behavior, including violence. Individuals may experience jaw-clenching and teeth-grinding, irritation, headaches, vomiting, panic/anxiety, convulsions, heart attack, brain damage, exhaustion, dehydration, and heatstroke. While under the influence of the drug the user may dance for hours at a time at a "rave" or techno-music party without rest or hydration. Without rest and water consumption, body temperature can be raised to dangerous levels followed by collapse and heat stroke.

Death can occur, especially if the dehydration and enhanced body temperature are not controlled. In some users confusion, depression, sleep problems, anxiety, and paranoia have been reported even weeks after the drug is taken.

Long-term use of Ecstasy appears to produce damage to the serotonin systems in the brain. Serotonin plays a part in regulating emotion, memory, sleep, pain, and higher-order cognitive processes.

This damage can cause many different cognitive and behavioral disturbances, including impairment of memory. Despite the danger, or in ignorance of it, many take Ecstasy simply to feel good or to combine stimulation with feelings of affection, warmth, and love. Also, because the drug dramatically increases energy levels, it reduces the perceived need to eat, drink, or sleep. As a result, users can endure all-night, and sometimes two- or three-day dance parties.

What are the symptoms of Ecstasy use?

A person who's taken the drug may exhibit a rapid heart rate, dilated pupils, distractibility, and confusion. Other signs include jaw-clenching and teeth-grinding, skin hot to the touch, and heavy perspiration.

How can schools and school employees help prevent Ecstasy use?

Education is the answer. All school employees, parents, and students must be educated about Ecstasy use and about addiction. Schools should have an in-house or outside specialist available for assistance. Resources on understanding and preventing drug abuse and addiction should be made available. Too often students get drug information from their friends or from pro-drug Web sites. ✔

The following are possible short-term side effects of taking Ecstasy (MDMA):

- Nausea
- Depression
- Panic or anxiety
- Dehydration
- Teeth-grinding
- Muscle-cramping
- Headache
- Paranoia and hallucinations
- Increased body temperature
- Irrational behavior, including violence
- Convulsions, heart attack, or death

Below are possible long-term side effects of taking Ecstasy (MDMA):

- Addiction and tolerance
- Damage to brain cells, leading to memory loss
- Risk of contracting or spreading sexually transmitted diseases

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

• Cardwell Nuckols, Ph.D is an internationally recognized authority on such issues as child and adolescent disruptive disorders and alcohol and drug abuse and addiction. He has published 14 books and workbooks, and numerous video and audio series. He can be reached at cnuckols@elitecorp.org or at www.cardwellnuckols.com.

Web Sites

• White House Office of National Drug Control Policy's National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign: www.freevibe.com for kids; www.TheAntiDrug.com for parents; and www.teachersguide.org for educators.

• National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): www.clubdrugs.org; and www.nida.nih.gov/drugpages/mdma.html; and http://165.112.78.61/NIDA_Notes/NNVol14N4/Ecstasy.html.

• National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information: www.health.org/govpubs/prevalert/v3i25.htm.

Asthma: Not Just a Childhood Condition

Asthma has grown to epidemic proportions among school-age children, affecting nearly one in 13 kids. But asthma can strike people of any age; almost 10 million American adults suffer from it. NEA member Buzzy Bohn, a school media educational assistant in Minneapolis, has lived with asthma since age 14. In a demanding occupation where she must avoid absence from work, Bohn has learned to cope with asthma and treat it effectively—and works through her NEA affiliate to fight indoor air pollution.

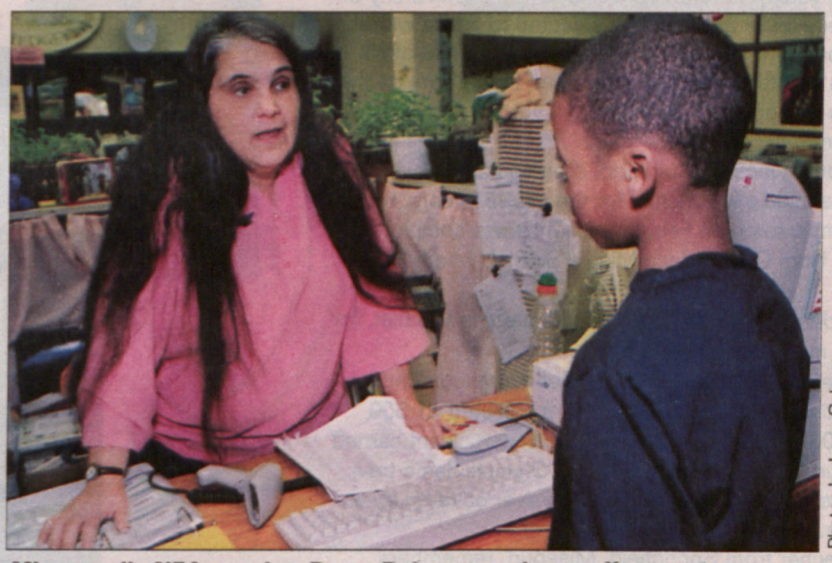
Buzzy Bohn is an adult and an education professional with a heavy workload. She is also a longtime asthma sufferer—sometimes prone to severe attacks.

Many of us think of asthma as a condition that affects only children, in part because asthma cases are most dangerously on the rise among the under-18 population. But of the 14.5 million Americans who suffer from this sometimes deadly disease, nearly 10 million are adults.

Asthma affects the lungs and causes wheezing, coughing, and breathing difficulty. The symptoms are usually caused by inflammation and tightening in the airways of the respiratory system. Attacks are often triggered by exposure to certain allergens—including many found in schools, such as dust, chalk dust, mold, and cleaning products.

Bohn is a media educational assistant at Loring Community School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Dust and cold air usually trigger her asthma. She says her condition is better than it used to be because she now knows how to control it and visits her doctor regularly.

"We [educators] don't want to take the time off to go to the doctor, but it's very important to take the time to care for ourselves," says Bohn. "With good management, asthma symptoms can be controlled."



Photos by Larry Salzman

Minneapolis NEA member Buzzy Bohn, an asthma sufferer, educates others about the condition and works to keep school air clean.

The media center, where Bohn spends her day, is equipped with a good ventilation system, but she still dusts the room regularly.

"The dust not only bothers me, but affects the children who have asthma as well," says Bohn.

Bohn is active on her NEA affiliate's Environmental Health and Safety Committee, where she works on issues of indoor air quality in her district's schools. Thanks to this committee, the schools in Bohn's district allow older children to keep their inhalers with them so that they can control minor asthma symptoms without having to visit a nurse.

Despite the difficulties of her condition, Bohn sees a plus side.

"Some of our children feel that they're different because of their asthma," she says. "I can say to them, 'Look, I have the same inhaler that you have. I have asthma too. I understand how scared you are when you can't breathe.'" ✔

—Kandra Strauss
NEA Health Information Network

For more: Go online to the NEA Health Information Network's www.asthmaandschools.org or call Jennie Young at 202/822-7481.

Quick Tip

Buzzy Bohn

Asthma symptoms can be controlled through good management of your condition. If you have asthma, here are some simple steps that will help you breathe easier.

■ See your doctor regularly to monitor your condition.

■ Carry a list with you of all the medications you are taking.

■ Carry a peak flow meter, which measures your lung capacity. If you are suffering a severe asthma attack, this meter will tell a school nurse or other health care professional how serious your condition is.

■ Avoid working around allergens or under conditions that aggravate your asthma. And work for cleaner air, if necessary, in your school.

Buzzy Bohn is a media educational assistant at Loring Community School in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She serves on her NEA affiliate's Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

NEA HIN

From the **NEA Health Information Network**

■ CDC PUBLISHES TWO NEW GUIDELINES FOR HIV

The CDC has published two new guidelines: *Revised Guidelines for HIV Counseling, Testing, and Referral,* and *Revised Recommendations for HIV Screening of Pregnant Women.* These guidelines, which replace those previously issued, are relevant to school health clinic staff, guidance counselors, teachers, parents, and anyone else who may need to advise pregnant teens or other youth at risk. View online at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/ or order a copy from the National Prevention Information Network at 800/458-5231.

■ 2002 *KICK BUTTS DAY* GUIDES AVAILABLE

On April 3, 2002, thousands of elementary, middle, and high school students will join in the seventh annual *Kick Butts Day* to show that kids are strong voices in the fight against Big Tobacco. The guide includes events for all ages, with activities both in the classroom and in the community. Order it free online at www.kickbuttsday.org or call 888/839-3869.

■ *KEEPING YOUR KIDS DRUG-FREE*

Whether you're an educator, parent, or other adult who cares about kids, this new 56-page guide aims to help you find the right words and approaches to keeping young people drug-free. It was created by the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign and endorsed by the National PTA and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Order free at 800/788-2800. Request publication PHD884.

■ NEW DOCUMENT ON MOLD HAZARDS OFFERED

Indoor exposure to mold can cause a variety of health problems. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently released *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings,* with guidelines for mold cleanup. Download a copy online at www.epa.gov/iaq/molds or phone 800/438-4318.

Going for Gold

NEA members fulfill th

During the past few months, members from Maine to California secured their places in Olympic history. Some carried the Olympic torch, while others performed in the opening ceremony or supervised the competitions. But regardless of their responsibilities, NEA's Olympians agree that being part of the Olympic Games is an unbelievable experience.

"It is one of the rarest opportunities that I've ever had," says **Mary Ann Wilcox**, a social studies teacher from Rock Springs, Wyoming. "It makes me proud to be an American."

Wilcox was one of about 500 ice skaters who performed in the opening ceremony of the 2002 Olympics. She skated as a child and resumed skating about 12 years ago.

"The whole Olympic movement in Salt Lake has been a real unifying effort," she says. "It's been a wonderful experience of which I'm pleased to be a part."

NEA member **Jerry Nadeau**, associate director of admissions at the University of Maine at Fort Kent, framed his acceptance letter after he was selected to assist with the biathlon, a sport that combines cross-country skiing with marksmanship. As one of six range supervisors, Nadeau (shown here resetting a target) monitored the targets on the course and recorded the points athletes earned for their shots.

"It really is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," he says.

As a child, **Sam Childress**, of Grand Junction, Colorado, dreamed about being part of the Olympics. Childress, who has used a wheelchair for the past 21 years, realized his dream when he carried the Olympic torch on February 2. Childress completed his leg of the torch relay about one mile from Grand Mesa Middle School, where he teaches science.

"You hope that you inspire your students when you get to do something like that, for them to look at me and get a little bit of motivation," he says.

The Salt Lake Organizing Committee, Coca-Cola, and Chevrolet accepted nominations in March and April 2001 for potential torchbearers. Organizers selected 11,500 torchbearers from the more than 210,000 nominations received. Each participant carried the torch about two-tenths of a mile. During its 65-day journey, the Olympic flame traveled 13,500 miles through 46 states, the greatest number of states ever covered by an Olympic torch relay in the United States.

Joe Fuller, a special education teacher from Springfield, Missouri, remembers seeing people along the road holding American flags and hearing them chant "U-S-A" during his torch run.

"They say it's like a life-changing experience and it really is, because you're drawn closer to everything. It's just really neat," Fuller says.

Fuller's run held special significance for him because his daughter, **Megan Culver**, also participated in the relay. Culver, who nominated her father for the relay, was the first person to light her torch when the relay arrived in Columbia, Missouri. Six runners later, the Olympic flame reached her dad.

"The truly amazing thing is that a lot of the schools let their kids out to watch the relay," says Culver, a fourth grade teacher from Liberty, Missouri. "So you saw a row of children sitting there and chanting 'U-S-A.' That was neat, especially being a teacher."

Phyllis Bailey, an NEA-Retired member in San Bernardino, California, ran in the torch relay after her son nominated her. Bailey retired from full-time teaching in 1991 after 43 years in the classroom. She has worked as a substitute since then.

"It's such an honor. I've always loved the Olympics," Bailey says of her run. "And to have my son nominate me was very moving."

Phyllis Ranson, of Holland, Michigan, still has a hard time describing how she felt when she was selected to run with the torch. "I was really surprised at my reaction, because as soon as I found out I started bawling—and I'm not a crier," she says. "I just never thought it would really happen."

The week following her run, Ranson, an elementary physical education teacher, brought her Olympic torch to school so her students could have their pictures taken with it.

"Even now, I'm floored that I actually got to do it," Ranson says. "It was like being famous for a while." ✔

—Kristen Loschert

Phyllis Bailey

David Bacon

Christopher Tomlin

Sam Child

NEA's Olympic Heroes: **Nancy Allen**, Missouri, teacher, torch relay; **Dane Allred**, Utah, high school drama teacher, torch relay; **Debbie Allred**, Utah, high school dance and Er Michigan, elementary physical education teacher, torch relay; **Kevin Bellavance**, Massachusetts, academic curriculum coordinator, torch relay; Kirk Benson, Idaho, social w middle school science teacher, torch relay; **Linda Conroy**, Utah, kindergarten teacher, torch relay; **Daniel Coughlin**, Massachusetts, high school dean, torch relay; **Bob Crosb** torch relay; **Joe Fuller**, Missouri, middle school special education teacher, torch relay; **Mary T. Haley**, Missouri, teacher, torch relay; **Susan Hanly**, Massachusetts, school nur Pennsylvania, teacher, torch relay; **Wendy Letourneau**, Massachusetts, special education assistant, torch relay; **Leda Levine**, Massachusetts, high school physical educatior school physical education teacher, torch relay; **Jerry Nadeau**, Maine, assistant director of admissions, range supervisor for the biathlon; **Keith O'Brien**, Massachusetts, soci relay; **Sam Provenza**, Colorado, elementary physical education teacher, torch relay; **Phyllis Ranson**, Michigan, elementary physical education teacher, torch relay; **Terri Rice**, teacher, torch relay; **Cathleen Tippett**, Idaho, fifth grade teacher, torch relay; **Jim Walker**, Utah, retired middle school history teacher, torch relay; **Sharon Wangsgard**, Utah, ju teacher, torch relay; **Mary Ann Wilcox**, Wyoming, high school social studies teacher, opening ceremony; **Gale Wondrasek**, North Dakota, middle school physical education te

eir dreams at the 2002 Olympic Winter Games

Andy Randall

Josh Fuller

SALT LAKE 2002
OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY
PRESENTED BY
CHEVROLET

Joe Olesweski

Josh Fuller

Melinda Dimitroff

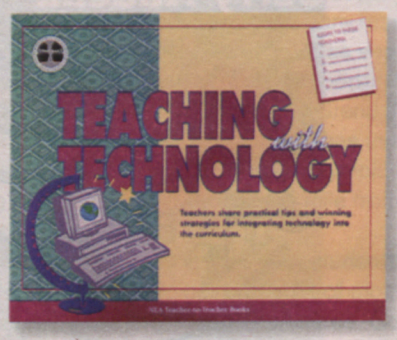
lish teacher, torch relay; **George Armstrong**, Michigan, high school special education teacher, torch relay; **Phyllis Bailey**, California, retired teacher, torch relay; **Don Beam**, ker, torch relay; **Clarinda Brueck**, New Jersey, sixth grade science teacher, torch relay; **Marjory Bubach**, North Dakota, English teacher, torch relay; **Sam Childress**, Colorado, Michigan, high school physical education teacher, torch relay; **Megan Culver**, Missouri, fourth grade teacher, torch relay; **James Farmer**, Idaho, middle school math teacher, e, torch relay; **Sarah Henderson**, Utah, elementary special education teacher, torch relay; **Patricia Larkin**, New Jersey, retired guidance counselor, torch relay; Chris Lechien, eacher, torch relay; **Laura Lukassen**, Colorado, special education teacher, torch relay; **Cathy Lynch**, Idaho, first grade teacher, torch relay; **Kathy Milan**, Massachusetts, high studies teacher, torch relay; **Tess Palczyski**, Utah, middle school special education teacher, torch relay; **Ned Pollert**, Colorado, high school special education teacher, torch olorado, junior high school teacher, torch relay; **Allen Russell**, Colorado, elementary physical education teacher, torch relay; **Linda Stacey**, Massachusetts, special education or high school physical education teacher, torch relay; **Trudy Welsh**, Colorado, elementary teacher, torch relay; **Russ Werth**, North Dakota, high school physical education cher, torch relay; **Dave Potter**, Michigan, adaptive physical education teacher, torch relay.

STOP TEACHING

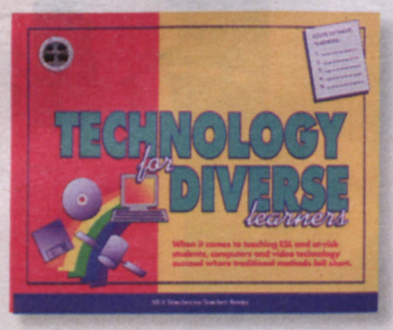
Like You're Still *in the* 20th Century

A great resource for your district's or school's technology committee!

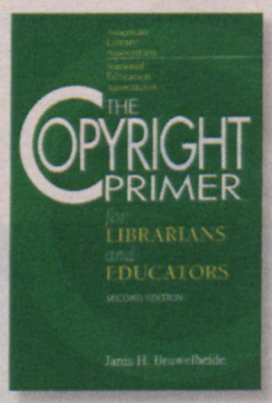
Maybe this is the year you resolved to finally use a computer without hyperventilating. Or maybe you're the one colleagues come to with all their computer problems—but you could use some fresh ideas for integrating technology into the curriculum. Whether you're a computer whiz, or the Internet makes you dizzy, the NEA Professional Library has a package of books to help you use technology more effectively.



Teaching with Technology tackles the tough question: How do you integrate technology into the curriculum in a meaningful way? If you're ready to stop teaching about technology and start using it as a learning tool for core subjects, this book will show you how. NEA members describe how they revamped instruction to make technology a meaningful part of their teaching.



Concerned about making sure all the kids in your school become techno-savvy? In *Technology for Diverse Learners*, educators who work with ESL and at-risk students show how computers and video technology succeed where traditional methods fall short.



Is is okay to copy an image from someone's Web site and put it on your class's site? Have you heard rumblings from the district office about distance learning? *The Copyright Primer* is an indispensable reference tool to help you do the right thing with new media.

And finally, there's a book to help you answer the question, "How are we going to pay for all these new tools?" In *How To Get Grants and Free Stuff*, classroom teachers demystify the grant writing process for you and show you how to tap into freebies.

Buy all FOUR and pay for THREE!

Priced separately, these books would cost $49.85 —but the Technology Package is available at a special price of $39.90 for NEA Members ($47.90 for nonmembers). Item #2175-4-00-D.

Order online at www.nea.org/books or call 800/229-4200.

shipping & handling will be added to all orders.

NEA Professional Library • Distribution Center • 9050 Junction Drive • Annapolis Junction, MD 20701

Paying Down Debt; Post-9/11

Q: My husband and I have $38,000 in student loans. We also want to start saving for a house. What should we do?

A: Paying down debt should be everyone's top financial priority. But flexibility is important if you want to meet your goals.

I would make a distinction between credit card debt and student loan debt in that the latter did not result from overspending. If you told me you owed $38,000 in credit card debt, I would say it was critical to pay it off fast and reform your spending habits at the same time. That is not the case for you, though.

You know you can't buy a home without a down payment. If I were in your situation, I would save for the down payment at the same time I paid on the debt. The best way to save is to have money deducted from your paycheck or bank account each week or month before you get the chance to spend it.

Putting money aside in tax-deferred retirement plans is another top priority even for those who are in debt. If you get some kind of match on a 403(b) or 401(k) plan, you should contribute enough to capture that match.

There are endless rules for getting your finances in shape. But the overriding one is that you must have the discipline to save and then the flexibility to see where it will do you the most good right now.

Q: I plan to retire next year. How much of my money should be in stocks?

A: An old rule of thumb says to take 100 minus your age and put the result into stocks. So if you are 60, that would mean 40 percent of your retirement pot goes into the stock market. Like other yardsticks, this one is both useful and flawed. It's been around for a long time and was more useful when life expectancies were shorter. Today a 60-year-old might live to be more than 100, and I think he needs more than 40 percent in stocks for growth.

But you also should think about your Social Security benefits and the other pension income you will have. You don't want money in the stock market that you will need for living expenses over the next five years. Money that you won't need for more than five years can go into stocks.

Q: The terrorist attacks have made me worry about my family's security. I read that life insurance should equal eight times income. Is this true?

A: Everyone is thinking about this right now. I was in New York on September 11, and I wondered what regrets I would have had if I had been a casualty of that disaster. The answers all had to do with my family. I felt I hadn't organized things properly for them and – more importantly – that I hadn't articulated core beliefs to my children as I should have done.

As for life insurance, the seven-to-eight-times income rule is the one I hear most often. That's more than I have and more than I can afford. Further, a financial planner would say it's too vague, that you must list all of your family's financial needs first.

I agree and I disagree. One of the problems with financial rules is that they get so complex that many of us just throw up our hands in despair. It is much better to get some level of coverage in place. The idea of life insurance is to provide a cushion for a young family while assets build. So as equity grows in your home and your retirement account, the amount of insurance coverage you need goes down. If you can afford seven to eight times your income until then, good for you.

Q: Our daughter has been offered a summer internship that pays nothing. Last summer, she earned $5,000 as a waitress. What should she do?

A: Five thousand dollars is a lot of money. But an internship often makes the difference between snagging a job right out of college and spending a long, frustrating period of looking for work. If the internship is at a place she would like to work after graduation, I suspect she'd regret passing it up.

We don't know what the job market will be like in the spring of 2003, but it is very tight right now. Every one of us should be considering the ramifications of that and what it means for our career paths.

Mary Rowland is an author and contributor to several financial planning magazines. E-mail your personal finance questions to MoneyQuestions@neamb.com.

Thrifty Educator

This month's money-saving tips come from Carla Herbert, a fourth grade teacher in Leavenworth, Kansas, and Lois Barreto, a third grade teacher from Detroit, Michigan.

Herbert: "Here is an idea on how to get free stuff from Highlights and U.S. Kids magazines. These magazines have applications that they expect teachers to send home and get parents to sign. Instead of sending them home, I ask parents to sign them during our first parent/teacher conference.

I explain to them that it's up to them whether or not they want to purchase the magazine, but we can get free stuff with even just their signature saying they do not wish to purchase.

They don't need to write their address if they don't wish to buy it and they gladly do this for me. I usually have enough signatures to get a year's subscription and some free stickers."

Barreto: "I go to the armed services recruiting offices and ask for book covers and pencils. They are usually glad to oblige. They have other free things for classrooms too. I use the free pencils as rewards for 100% on tests."

Got an idea?

If you have a suggestion for how your colleagues can save money at school, send it along to neatoday@nea.org.

Ninety-seven percent of participants in NEA Members Insurance Trust programs would recommend them to other NEA members.

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

Assuring the security of our families is foremost in the minds of people today. Advance planning is the key to safeguarding our loved ones, and NEA Member Benefits offers two newly enhanced insurance programs to help meet those needs.

The NEA Term Life Insurance Plan now offers an optional rider that provides added coverage for loss of life caused by an accident. For an additional small monthly premium, this rider doubles the amount of the Plan benefit. The Plan offers basic coverage amounts from $50,000 to $150,000, and because it's term life insurance, the premiums are attractive to the most cost-conscious of individuals.

The new NEA AD&D Plus Insurance Plan provides an expanded array of benefits to further protect members and their families. The more than 10 new benefits include a Spouse (or domestic partner) and Child Tuition Reimbursement Benefit, a Loss Due to Coma Benefit, and a Day Care Reimbursement Benefit. The enhanced Plan also provides an additional $10,000 in coverage each year for the first five years of enrollment for accidental death that occurs while on public transportation.

Like the original NEA AD&D Insurance Plan, acceptance is guaranteed without a medical exam or any health questions. Members may obtain up to $120,000 in coverage and purchase coverage for spouses or domestic partners and/or dependent children.

For more information on the enhanced NEA Term Life and NEA AD&D Plus Insurance Plans, please call the NEA Member Benefits Member Service Center toll free at 800/637-4636, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET.

Final Reports

of Campaign Revenues and Expenses

NEA Standing Rule 10.E provides as follows:

Campaign Expenses. No portion of dues money collected at the local, regional, state, or national level shall be used to promote the candidacy of any individual for an NEA office.

Using forms provided by the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules, each candidate shall file a preliminary report of campaign revenues and expenses, including projected revenues and expenses, with the committee prior to the opening of nominations at the Representative Assembly. A final report, on the forms provided by the committee, must be filed with the committee no later than thirty (30) days following certification of the election results. The committee shall report to the Representative Assembly, prior to any nominations or elections, whether any candidate has in any manner violated the election rules and regulations. The final report of campaign revenues and expenditures shall be printed in an appropriate NEA publication for inspection by any member.

The following reports were filed in a timely manner and are printed pursuant to Rule 10.E.

Candidates are listed below by office and by alphabetical order within each office.

Candidates for Executive Committee

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$5,673.98
Persons within the state	$ 10,981.62	Mailing	985.40
Groups within the state	27,421.00	Other media materials	11,226.46
Persons outside the state	2,571.50	Hospitality and entertainment	119.46
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	4,385.33
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	7,769.40	Giveaway(s) if any	70.57
Donations in kind	0	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	71.45
TOTAL	$48,743.52	**TOTAL**	$22,532.65

Signed: Michael Billirakis

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$1,450.67
Persons within the state	$ 476.00	Mailing	757.45
Groups within the state	0	Other media materials	110.00
Persons outside the state	1,447.00	Hospitality and entertainment	0
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	1,470.00	Giveaway(s) if any	2,706.70
Donations in kind	1,631.82	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$5,024.82	**TOTAL**	$5,024.82

Signed: Marsha Smith

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$5,649.08
Persons within the state	$ 14,585.00	Mailing	150.00
Groups within the state	0	Other media materials	0
Persons outside the state	491.00	Hospitality and entertainment	0
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	95.40
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	4,360.00	Giveaway(s) if any	1,153.06
Donations in kind	0	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	5,345.00
TOTAL	$19,436.00	**TOTAL**	$12,392.54

Signed: Richie Malizia

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$7,334.77
Persons within the state	$ 20,173.00	Mailing	1,870.91
Groups within the state	0	Other media materials	0
Persons outside the state	1,853.00	Hospitality and entertainment	0
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	21,406.77
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	19,055.16	Giveaway(s) if any	9,255.87
Donations in kind	9,032.49	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	912.84
TOTAL	$50,113.65	**TOTAL**	$40,781.16

Signed: Lynette Tanaka

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$18,788.90
Persons within the state	$ 5,935.00	Mailing	2,680.00
Groups within the state	0	Other media materials	5,813.00
Persons outside the state	8,100.00	Hospitality and entertainment	350.00
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	15,698.52
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0	Giveaway(s) if any	15,298.23
Donations in kind	0	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$14,035.00	**TOTAL**	$58,628.65

Signed: Michael Marks

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$7,700.00
Persons within the state	$ 12,200.00	Mailing	110.00
Groups within the state	0	Other media materials	2,350.00
Persons outside the state	370.00	Hospitality and entertainment	1,600.00
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	4,650.00
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	6,500.00	Giveaway(s) if any	3,010.00
Donations in kind	400.00	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	300.00
TOTAL	$19,470.00	**TOTAL**	$19,720.00

Signed: Kathie Trongo

SOURCES OF REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Cash		Printing	$12,429.34
Persons within the state	$ 9,438.00	Mailing	1,142.95
Groups within the state	1,451.00	Other media materials	245.74
Persons outside the state	1,868.00	Hospitality and entertainment	7,489.09
Groups outside the state	0	Campaign Committee expenses	2,008.73
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	13,527.10	Giveaway(s) if any	2,782.22
Donations in kind	166.00	Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$26,450.10	**TOTAL**	$26,098.07

Signed: Becky Pringle

Candidates for Administrator At-Large

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$255.00
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$255.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$0
Mailing	8.00
Other media materials	25.00
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	18.00
Giveaway(s) if any	10.00
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$61.00

Signed: Mike Buckner

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$500.00
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$500.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$350.00
Mailing	0
Other media materials	0
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	150.00
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$500.00

Signed: Josephine Harris

Candidates for NEA Director, ESP At-Large

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$290.00
Groups within the state	270.00
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$560.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$300.00
Mailing	60.00
Other media materials	50.00
Hospitality and entertainment	40.00
Campaign Committee expenses	150.00
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$600.00

Signed: Jackie Aubrey

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$0
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$0

EXPENSES	
Printing	$0
Mailing	0
Other media materials	0
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	0
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$0

Signed: Sara Horton

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$210.00
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$210.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$2.35
Mailing	0
Other media materials	0
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	43.50
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$45.85

Signed: Ray Heidemond

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$150.00
Groups within the state	500.00
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$650.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$350.00
Mailing	0
Other media materials	50.00
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	250.00
Giveaway(s) if any	50.00
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$700.00

Signed: Nancy Toombs

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$167.00
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$167.00

EXPENSES	
Printing	$160.00
Mailing	0
Other media materials	0
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	7.00
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$167.00

Signed: David Hockady

SOURCES OF REVENUE	
Cash	
Persons within the state	$0
Groups within the state	0
Persons outside the state	0
Groups outside the state	0
Income from raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
Donations in kind	0
TOTAL	$0

EXPENSES	
Printing	$0
Mailing	0
Other media materials	0
Hospitality and entertainment	0
Campaign Committee expenses	0
Giveaway(s) if any	0
Raffles, lotteries, or similar fund-raising activities	0
TOTAL	$0

Signed: Sharon Scott

Why Aren't There More Minority Teachers?

Book delves into critical shortage.

EXCERPT

"The impediments that students of color face when considering a career in teaching center on the attitudes that surround them, that affect them, and that humiliate them as future teachers. The image of teaching as a 'namby-pamby,' 'goody-two-shoes,' part-time, female job with 'summers off with the kids' still lingers even as the actual requirements for the profession demand highly competent, computer-skilled, multilingual, dynamic individuals who can handle kids from every walk of life."

THE COLOR OF TEACHING
By **June A. Gordon**
128 pp. $27.99 paperback (Routledge/Falmer Press)
To order visit: www.routledgefalmer.com or call 800/634-7064.

There is a challenging issue facing America's public school: how to build a diverse teaching force. More than one third of our public school students are of color, yet only 13 percent of their teachers are.

Why aren't there more minority teachers in our classrooms? What is keeping students of color from entering the teaching profession?

In *The Color of Teaching*, June Gordon, a professor at the University of California-Santa Cruz, attempts to answer those questions by exploring the cultural and societal forces that discourage people of color from becoming teachers.

The book is based on Gordon's two-year research into the subject, interviewing more than 200 persons of color—mostly teachers and education professionals—to uncover the real reasons behind the minority shortage, in their own words and thoughts.

In their responses the African American, Asian American, Native American and Latino participants explore the many community forces in their cultures that deeply affect young adults' career decisions.

Nearly all mention the need for greater economic incentives to attract and retain teachers of color. But overwhelmingly, the participants say inadequate pay is not the pivotal reason students are resisting teaching as a career.

Students of color are not becoming teachers, says Gordon, because of lack of encouragement from their own families, communities, and peers. Nearly all of the participants—except for the Asian Americans—also believe that students of color reject teaching because of their own negative experiences in school, which have been "fraught with hostility, misunderstanding and distrust."

Other recurring themes include the image and lack of respect for teachers, as well as pressure from parents who want their children to either stay close to home or pursue higher-status professions.

Teachers themselves also admitted that they play a significant role in their students' perceptions of education and of teaching as a profession. Many speak of encouraging the few, often middle-class minority students who are clearly academically oriented, to go into high-paying, high-status careers.

Gordon asserts that discouragement of children to become teachers also comes from parents, counselors, peers, the media, and community. She writes: For many families, the cost of educating a child is great in terms of both human and material sacrifice. Institutions of higher education often require that students leave their family and community to attend college. For some, the cost appears too high; the move seems not only unrealistic, but perhaps suicidal."

Throughout the book, Gordon seeks to identify solutions for all aspects of the challenges facing students of color as they move through schooling and compete for careers. Of particular interest is a chapter dedicated to providing recommendations and insights from the interviewees themselves on how to address the situation affecting the future supply of minority teachers for American schools.

Some of the recommendations include improving the image of teachers, involving more parents, and providing early teaching-like experiences for students of color.

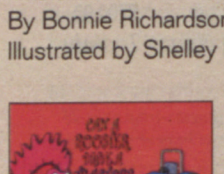
While it is a scholarly read, the raw emotion of the educators interviewed keep it interesting and insightful. The book should appeal to anyone who is interested in attracting more teachers of color into the profession—particularly policymakers, educators in teacher preparation institutions and minority teachers.

In her conclusion, Gordon asserts that teachers themselves must help create a fundamental change in attitudes toward education within communities of color. "If we are to have sufficient teachers for America's schools," she writes, "students of color must have the guidance of their communities, and their teachers must show the way". ✔

—By Dina S. Gómez

BOOKS by NEA Members

Can A Rooster Drive A Tractor?
By Bonnie Richardson Murphy
Illustrated by Shelley P. Richardson



This book was written and illustrated to help small children learn an important life skill. It uses illustrations rooted in farm life that are rich with color, style, and humor to emphasize the importance of continuing to ask questions. The rhymes are lively and fun. Repetition and predictability will support pre-readers and beginning readers who will enjoy reading this book over and over. $14.95. Published by the Alabama Farmers Federation, P.O. Box 11000, Montgomery, AL 36191.

Fireflies and Chiggers
By Don Rudolph

Rudolph has put together a collection of true stories based on 39 years of experience as a classroom teacher, coach, and administrator. Each chapter deals with a different problem that most teachers will encounter during their first three years of teaching and includes solutions. Proceeds from book sales will go to Tri-State Scholarships to assist students majoring in education who have serious financial problems. Cost for NEA members is $15, nonmembers $18, plus $2 s&h. Order from Tri-State Scholarships, P. O. Box 3572, Paducah, KY 42002.

Teaching Music at the Secondary Level: A pedagogical and curricular guide
By Steven Porter and Joel Smales

If you aspire to teach music in a secondary school or are already doing so, this book will be an indispensable aid. It explores virtually every aspect of classroom and performance music with candor, wit, and expertise. From writing lesson plans to computerizing your library to dealing with student behavior, every page is chock full of the information that will help make your programs outstanding. $28.95. Order from Empire Publishing Services, P.O. Box 1344, Studio City, CA 91614-0344 or call 818/784-8918.

Counting on Your Fingers is Not Immoral
By John Mudore

Volume I of this series is designed for middle school mathematics, prealgebra courses, and special education classes to help make math accessible to every student. Volume II, on integers and equations, is a fitting sequel to Volume I's fractions, decimals, and percents. Each lesson demands that students fully understand a concept and not just memorize information. $25 and $20, respectively, from Infinity Publishers, P.O. Box 333, Black Earth, WI 53515, or call 608/767-2381.

FREE OR INEXPENSIVE

E-Mail Whiz

Using E-mail is second nature to many of us, but do we actually know how the whole process works? Written by Anne Rooney, *E-mail Wizard* takes kids through the steps of sending E-mail, starting with how to set up an E-mail account. This helpful book even shows kids (and adults, in some cases) how to send attachments and open zip drives. Other computer and software books in the Whizz Kids series include *Web Smart* and *Word Power*. $4.95 from Big Fish, contact Sterling Publishing Company at 212/532-7160 to order.

A Learning Revolution

Focusing on the Met School, a public high school in Providence, Rhode Island, *One Kid at a Time* by Eliot Levine takes the reader through the inner workings of the urban school to see how the students are succeeding. Students at the Met School have personalized curriculums and must do internships based on their interests. They have the same teacher for four years, but they don't have classes, tests, or grades. Although the book is based on this revolutionary model, it provides practical ideas that can be applied to any school, big or small. $18.95 through Teachers College Press, 800/575-6566.

Staying on Track

Teaching kids how to stay away from the influence of drugs and alcohol and helping them deal with peer pressure and bullies is something that has to be done, but it is often difficult. In his book, *Keeping Kids Safe*, Dr. Kenneth Shore tells teachers and parents how to help prevent school violence, teenage suicide, and gun violence. He offers tips on how to talk to kids who may be drinking or using drugs. This book provides an invaluable resource to teachers and parents in showing them how to approach even the toughest issues kids are facing today. $12. Visit www.phdirect.com or call 800/947-7700.

U.S. Exploration Through Fiction

If you are looking for a way to link fiction to geography, Scholastic's *35 Best Books for Teaching U.S. Regions* by Toni Buzzeo and Jane Kurtz is a great place to get started. This tool provides a guide to fiction books that take place in different regions of the country. If your class is studying the Pacific Region, then this book gives you five fiction books that relate to the Pacific. With this book, you can tie history, culture, literature, and geography all into one. $14.95 from Scholastic Professional Books, 631/288-0568.

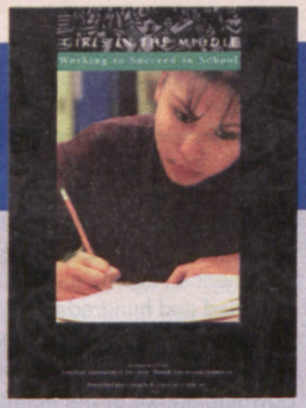
Secrets of Wealth

Did you know that young people between the ages of 7 and 21 who save $2,000 each year and place their money in a savings account with an average interest rate of 7.25% until age 65 will then have $1,000,000! *The Young Investor: Projects and Activities for Making Your Money Grow* explains everything young people need to know to be money-savvy. The book explains business and the skill of investing in easy-to-understand language so that children can grow up business-literate and get an early start at making their money grow. $13.95. Available in bookstores nationally, or call 800/888-4741.

The Ultimate Sport Lead-Up Game Book

By Guy Bailey

If you're looking for some activities to use in teaching children beginning sports skills, this is the book for you. Author Guy Bailey has put together over 170 fun and easy-to-use games in 13 different sports. Each game is fully illustrated and described in a clear, user-friendly format. $23.95 each, plus $3.95 shipping per book. To order, call 800/431-1579 or write to Educators Press, 5333 NW Jacson St., Camas, WA 98607.



The NEA Professional Library Celebrates Women's History Month

Girls in the Middle: Working to Succeed in School
116pp. $12.95 NEA members
$14.95 nonmembers
#2503-2-00-FN

An engaging study of middle school girls—the critical choices they make in their school lives and the strategies they use to cope with adolescence. By linking girls' success to school reforms such as team teaching and cooperative learning, this report gives educators the insights they need to create new possibilities for their students.

Girls in the Middle Video
50 min. VHS #7708-3-00-FN
$19.95 NEA members
$24.95 nonmembers

An absorbing look at girls in three middle schools and the strategies they use to meet personal and academic challenges in their daily lives. Includes video guide with discussion questions.

EXCERPT

Our research confirms what much of the literature suggests: reforms that are good for girls—such as learning communities, close connections with adults, cooperative groups, active learning, and curriculum that builds on students' experience—are good for all students. Making gender equity an explicit aspect of the middle school reform agenda will strengthen education for girls and boys.

To order, call 800/229-4200, or check the Web at www.nea.org/books.

TVTIPS

A Death in the Family

PBS, March 25, 9:00 p.m., ET, check local listings

CBS, February 24, 9:00 p.m., ET, check local listings

Adapted from James Agee's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic story, this ExxonMobil Masterpiece presentation explores the shattering effects of the early death of a father on a family. Set in 1915, the film recreates Agee's small, painstakingly drawn world of domestic happiness and shows how quickly it can be destroyed. This special presentation acknowledges the experience of grief and reality of death. ✔

KIDSNET, a national resource for children's media in Washington, DC, provides these listings. For additional listings and information, check the Web at www.kidsnet.org.

TVTIPS

The True Story of Black Hawk Down

The History Channel, March 4, 9:00 p.m., ET, check local listings.
On October 3, 1993, 120 American Delta units and Ranger infantry were dropped into Mogadishu to abduct two lieutenants of Somalian warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid. Instead, two American UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters were shot down. The mission lasted 15 hours and resulted in 18 American deaths and 73 wounded and hundreds of Somalians dead. Based on actual events and narrated by Mark Bowden, author of the nonfiction best-selling novel by the same name, this presentation offers a comprehensive perspective of the battle of Mogadishu, Somalia—the longest sustained ground battle involving American soldiers since the Vietnam War.

Roughing It

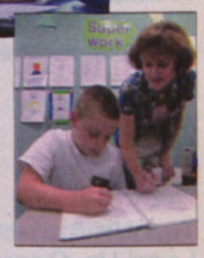
The Hallmark Channel, March 16, 8:00 p.m., ET, check local listings.
Based on the 1872 novel "Roughing It" by Mark Twain, this four-hour special is a travelogue of Mark Twain's adventures as a young man in the old West. As such, the book and film are a first-hand account of what the country was actually like in those days.

All the King's Men

PBS, March 18, ET, check local listings.
According to one of the most curious legends of the First World War, the Sandringham Company, a mix of servants, grooms, and gardeners from the Royal Family's Norfolk Estate, advanced into battle on August 12, 1915, never to be seen again. This Exxon Mobil Masterpiece presentation lifts the veil of secrecy and uncovers their true fate. This program contains sensitive material, discretion is advised.

The Ultimate Guide: The Iceman

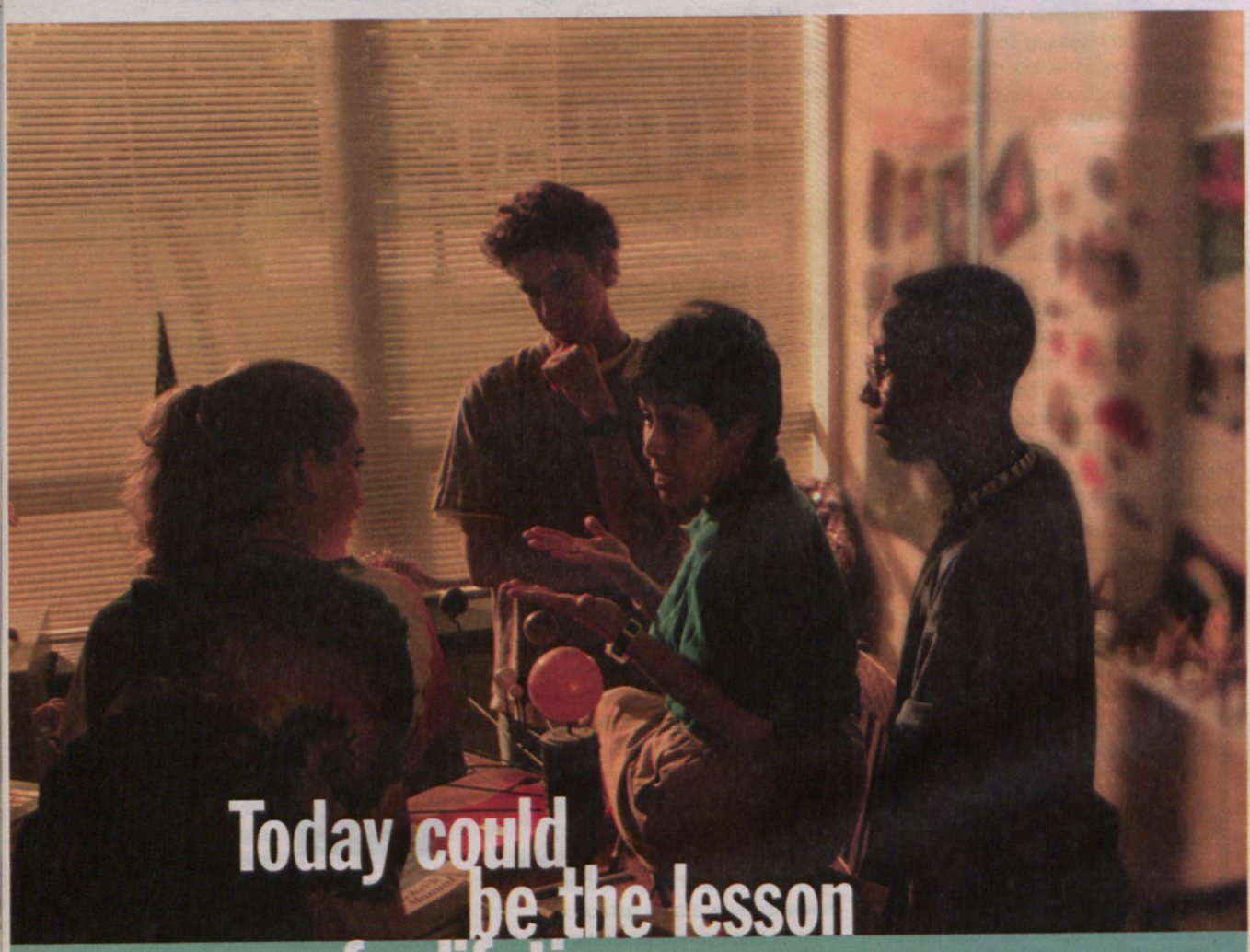
Discovery Channel, March 25, 9:00 p.m., ET, check local listings.



A follow-up to *Iceman: Mummy from the Stone Age*, this one-hour special follows researchers as they defrost "Otzi's" body once again to reopen the case of how he lived and died, examining bacteria found in his intestines, and studying his DNA to help trace his present-day descendents. The Stone Age is brought back to life through re-enactments and computer-generated imagery; including 3-D computer recreations that reveal what Otzi's face may have looked like 5,300 years ago.

Misunderstood Minds

PBS, March 27, 9:00 p.m., ET, check local listings.
For one in five students, learning is an exhausting and frustrating struggle. Often mistakenly called "lazy" or "stupid" by others, these children actually suffer from a learning disability, which if not addressed, can have a devastating impact on the stu-



Let's face it. Health class isn't enough to counter all the bad information kids are getting about drugs. So whether you teach science, social studies, theater or language arts, we're making it easy to incorporate drug awareness education into the standards-based material you already need to cover. Log on to **www.teachersguide.org** to find classroom activities designed to help you talk about drugs with your students.

Anti-drug lessons last a lifetime.

TEACHERS.
THE ANTI-DRUG.

dents' self-esteem and future academic and social success. This 90-minute special follows the stories of five families as, together with experts, they try to understand their children's learning difficulties. This program shows the children's problems in a new light, providing an informative forum for opening a dialogue on how best to manage these young and vulnerable misunderstood minds. An interactive companion Web site can be found at www.pbs.org/misunderstoodminds.org.

The Laramie Project

The Laramie Project HBO, March 9, 8:00 p.m., ET, check local listings. Set in and around Laramie, Wyoming, this adaptation of the off-Broadway play of the same name focuses on the events after the 1998 murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard. The Laramie Project presents not only the incidents surrounding the murder but the trials and extensive media coverage that followed the hate crime. Based on actual interviews with people in the community, the film provides a variety of perspectives on the crime and its effect on the people of Laramie. This program may contain sensitive material.

Women's History Month

A&E, A&E Classroom, March, 7:00 a.m., ET, check local listings. In honor of Women's History Month, A&E Classroom will present Biography episodes about a variety of notable women, including Amelia Earhart, Karen Silkwood, Susan B. Anthony, and Joan of Arc.

FREE OR INEXPENSIVE

Educational Entertainment for Kids on the Go

Marcel Moves Mountains! and *Simon Makes Waves!* are two wonderfully illustrated children's books that will stir their imaginations and at the same time teach them valuable safety lessons. The playful text, including a glossary and tips, is perfect for reading aloud. And, interactive questions and comments on each page help to create an open communication of imaginative thinking between the reader and child. You can join Marcel in his adventures in learning to ride his bike, or follow Simon in his progression from a baby wishing to get out into the world as a surfer! $16.95. Mention where you read about these books and get a 25% discount. Telephone 818/706-9812 or visit www.endurancepublications.com.

An Unknown Heroine

Students probably haven't heard of Fanny Kemble, a renowned British stage star who became the mistress of a huge Georgia plantation and, subsequently, an eloquent critic of slavery. Kemble was very instrumental in shaping public opinion in the years before the Civil War. *Fanny Kemble's Civil Wars* by Catherine Clinton, Oxford University Press (paperbound $15.95) www.oup-usa.org chronicles Kemble's early life and shows how her role in society changed drastically after her short, unhappy marriage to the heir of a Georgia plantation owner, whom she derisively called her 'lord and master.' She published *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation* in which she powerfully described the misery she saw among the slaves, and became a powerful voice for abolition. The book was embraced by Northern critics as a permanent and most valuable chapter in our history. Kemble's fascinating life springs off the pages of this remarkable biography.

Lasting Friendships

Building friendships is something children should learn at an early age and with *Friends!*, you can help them do just that. The book, by Deborah F. Fink, is in a child-friendly format and encourages children to be the greatest friends they can be. *Friends!* is also a helpful resource for parents, teachers, and counselors who want to focus on character education.The book's various characters present ten values and show how they are important for friendship. The values include: caring, respect, accountability, citizenship, courage, honor, justice, purity, integrity, and spirituality. The theories put forth in *Friends!* can also be put into practice with various activities along the way. This book guides children and helps them set the foundation for meaningful friendships. $4.95 from Harmony Hearth LLC. Available at www.harmony-hearth.com.

Technology and Student Learning

Okay, so you have a computer in your classroom. Are you sure your students are actually learning anything from their technology projects? And what are the best strategies for integrating technology throughout the entire school system? What does the research say? SRI International, a leading independent research institute, has published a new book that chronicles six urban high schools' use of technology to support their educational goals. *The Connected School: Technology and Learning in High School* (240 pages) by Barbara Means, William R. Penuel, and Christine Padilla found that the most successful technology applications were those that empowered students to think for themselves. Exercises that required students to apply technology to complex, extended tasks (for example interacting with distant scientists involved in actual scientific expeditions and investigations) were among the most effective applications.($27.00) Available from Jossey-Bass at 800/274-4434.

Old Friends in a New Book

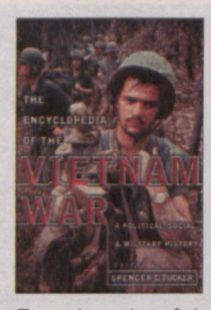
Charming animal stories are big class-pleasers, especially those written by the great Thornton Burgess. *The Big Book of Animal Stories* compiles classic stories originally published between 1910 and 1916 and revisits Buster Bear's run-ins with Little Joe Otter and retells the exploits of the ever-adventurous Peter Cottontail, Old Mother West Wind, and Grandfather Frog. It will introduce a whole new generation of children to the denizens of the Green Forest and the Smiling Pool. Along with lots of warmth and whimsy, these tales include important lessons about wildlife, the environment, and being true to your own nature. This paperbound ($7.95) edition includes delightful drawings by George Kerr and Harrison Cady (263 pages) from www.dover publications.com.

Phoebe's Great Escape

This novel about Phoebe, a thirteen-year-old enslaved girl and her escape to freedom on the Underground Railroad will certainly spark lively discussions about the true meaning of freedom and what freedom can ultimately cost. Students will identify with the plight of Phoebe and her family, who have been slaves her entire life. But she dreams a dream of freedom, and when her chance comes, she takes it. Author Virginia Frances Schwartz brings to life an important, often omitted, chapter in America's history as she relates Phoebe's harrowing experiences as a runaway, many of which are adapted from historic accounts of real escaped slaves. *If I Just Had Two Wings* (176 pages) is available from Stoddart Kids/ Stoddart Publishing 416/445-5991 for $15.95.

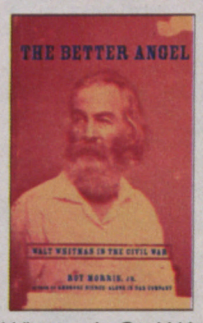
Vietnam War Encyclopedia

In need of some definitive information about the Vietnam War? Many bookshelves are sadly thin when it comes to 20th century history. This very fine reference work, *The Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War: A Political, Social, & Military History*, edited by Spencer C. Tucker, might be just what your school needs. With 900-odd entries on 608 pages, this comprehensive work has entries on Buddhism, "fragging," drug use, post-traumatic stress disorder, the impact of the war in film, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. With numerous entries by Vietnamese contributors, every aspect of the Vietnam War is illuminated by coverage of both American and Vietnamese perspectives. More than 200 primary source documents and an extensive index are included. Oxford University Press www.oup-usa.org (paperbound $25.00).



Whitman Civil War Bio

Walt Whitman was mired in depression as the Civil War began, subsisting on journalistic hackwork, his "great career" as a poet apparently stalled. Then for nearly three years he immersed himself in the devastation of the war, personally visiting, consoling, and tending to thousands of horribly wounded soldiers and keeping journals chronicling what he saw and how he felt. This new, full account of Whitman's Civil War years sheds new light on his poetry and the treatment of the war's sick and wounded, exploring a side of Whitman not fully examined previously. *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War* (270 pages) by Roy Morris, Jr. is endowed with the immediacy of contemporary reportage. Oxford University Press www.oup-usa.org (paperbound $15.95).



Folklore and Fairies

Right up there with unicorns and Christmas elves, fairies have always played a role in folklore, as this lovely book shows. From Mexico to China, fairies can be found in every corner of the world, if you know how to find them! And if your imagination is open to possibility, the fairies will

DIVERSITY Calendar

March

March 17—St. Patrick's Day
This day commemorates the Patron Saint of Ireland. The St. Patrick's Day custom came to America in 1737 and was first publicly celebrated in Boston. Visit www.st-patricks-day.com for more on St. Patrick's Day.

March 21—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
This day is to honor and remember people throughout the world who have been subjected to racial injustice. Call 212/963-4475 for more information.

March 21 (begins sunset March 20)—Naw-Ruz
The Baha'i New Year's Day is astronomically fixed to commence the year on the spring equinox. This day is considered one of the nine holy days of the year where work and school are suspended for Baha'is. E-mail usopi-ny@bic.org to find out more, or call 212/803-2500.

March 28 (begins sunset March 27)—Passover (Pesach)
This is the Jewish festival that marks the deliverance of the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

March 31—Easter
Always observed the first Sunday following the first full moon, Easter is the Christian celebration of Christ's resurrection.

march

April

April 6—Founding of the Mormon Church
Joseph C. Smith and Oliver Cowdery founded the church on this date in 1830. Go to www.mormon.org.

April 6—Tartan Day
Scottish-Americans are recognized on this day for their contributions to the United States. Celebrations will take place all around the country as well as ten Canadian provinces. Go to http://www.serve.com/shea/germusa/scotts.htm for more on this holiday.

April 9—Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah)
Honors the memory of six million Jewish people who died in the Nazi Holocaust. Go to www.ushmm.org for more information on the Holocaust.

April 17—Israel Independence Day
This day marks the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel. For more information, visit www.aish.com/holidays.

April 30-May 30—Celebration of Buddha's Birthday
A month-long celebration for the founder of Buddhism, who lived from 563 to 480 B.C. Visit www.religioustolerance.org/buddhism.htm for more on Buddhism and its beliefs.

april

IF ONLY
GRADING PAPERS
WERE THIS EASY

Now buying, building or refinancing a home is as easy as placing a toll-free call. Just dial 1-800-NEA-4-YOU for more information, or to apply for a mortgage. In most cases, you will receive a decision on the same call.*

NEA Members receive great mortgage rates, exceptional service, fast decisions and a 4 day/3 night "Driveaway Getaway" vacation** "on the house." (Transportation is not included.) It couldn't be easier.

Home equity loans and lines of credit are also available through Wells Fargo Home Equity.†

Call **1-800-NEA-4-YOU** (1-800-632-4968).
Mon. – Fri., 8 a.m. – midnight, Saturday, 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., E.T.
Home Equity Hours: Mon.– Fri. 8 a.m. – 9 p.m., Sat. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., E.T.
If you prefer, stop by your local Wells Fargo Home Mortgage branch, or visit us online at www.neamb.com.

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

WELLS FARGO HOME MORTGAGE

NEA HOME FINANCING PROGRAM ... HELPING TO MAKE DREAMS AFFORDABLE.

The benefits of the NEA Home Financing Program® cannot be combined with any other offer. NEA Home Financing Program is a registered mark of NEA's Member Benefits Corp. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc. is licensed by the Department of Corporations under the California Residential Mortgage Lending Act, is a New Jersey Department of Banking Licensed Mortgage Banker and is a Rhode Island Mortgage Lender Licensee. ©2001 Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Information is accurate as of date of printing and is subject to change without notice. Credit subject to approval. *You will need a minimum of a 5% down payment and an overall good credit profile to be eligible for a loan decision during your application phone call. Single-family dwellings, townhouses and planned unit developments only. Condos, co-ops and investment properties are excluded. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc. loan originations are limited to properties located in the U.S. only. Also, because with this program your loan decision may not be subject to an appraisal, you may want to consult your legal advisor to include an appraisal contingency in your purchase contract. Other underwriting conditions may apply, such as maximum loan amount. **This offer is only valid on loan applications made on or after January 1, 2001 and closed on or prior to December 31, 2002 through this program. Offer is subject to loan approval and other terms and conditions. This offer is available for first mortgages through Wells Fargo Home Mortgage and not available on home equity loans and lines of credit. The "Driveaway Getaway" vacation package will be issued within fifteen (15) business days after closing of your new loan with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage through this program. Vacation packages are valid one year from date of issue. Transportation is not included. Reservations are subject to availability and must be made at least fourteen (14) days in advance of travel dates. Customer is responsible for all incidentals (i.e., hotel taxes, food, beverages, telephone calls, etc.). Vacation is not valid for groups. Call 1-800-632-4968 for additional "Driveaway Getaway" vacation package details and terms and conditions. The "Driveaway Getaway" vacation package is a program of MMS Incentives, which is solely responsible for the administration and all aspects of the vacation package. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is in no way responsible or liable for the services. †Home Equity financing provided by Wells Fargo Banks. Members FDIC. **Equal Housing Lenders.** ©2001 Wells Fargo Banks. All Rights Reserved. **Home equity lines of credit are not available in Texas.**

Branches: Enter DM# DMC0063299V in LIS

HFNT0302

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

like you best of all, according to *Finding Fairies: Secrets for Attracting Little People from Around the World* ($17.95). It describes various types of fairies around the world and suggests related activities, recipes, and crafts such as making Fairy-Frosted Flowers for the wee folk to find and eat. Very comprehensive, this book delves into the fairy lore of six continents, and provides recipes for Pixie Porridge and Marbled Fairy Milk. Written by Michelle Roehm and Marieanne-Monson Burton, *Finding Fairies* is stunningly illustrated by David Hohn. Available from Beyond Words Publishing 800/284-9673.

Word Wizardry

Do the computers in your classroom have piles of "cheat sheets," or hints and pointers for your students to use? Could you use some tips

about using Microsoft Word? *Whizz Kids Word Power: Be a Whizz With Microsoft Word* (64 pages) to the rescue! It's a marvelously simple book of tips and tricks and fun projects we can do with Word—and it's not just for kids. This little book would also be very helpful to adults who are just learning to use a computer. Basic lessons on manipulating text include helpful pictures and extra tips. This organized booklet is clearly written, has an index and good illustrations, and even a page of stickers. Projects include changing messages to a secret code, creating party invitations, writing nice letters and thank-you notes, and making posters. Paperbound $4.95 from www.amazon.com.

Four Larks and a Wren

The highly respected Poetry for Young People Series from Sterling Publishing, www.sterlingpub.com, which has published volumes of the works of Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, now offers *Poetry for Young People: Edward Lear*.

There was an old man with a beard, Who said, "It is just as I feared!—Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren, Have all built their nest in my beard!" Lear's finest and funniest poems race and rhyme with an irresistible beat. Seeming nonsense often hides a serious notion, though. Creatures and people who don't fit into the ordinary world are rewarded for their courage in being true to themselves and brave enough to seek their own way. An introduction describes Lear's life: 20th of 21 children, limerick writer (see above), publisher of exuberant nonsense poetry. (hard cover $14.95) 800/805-5489.

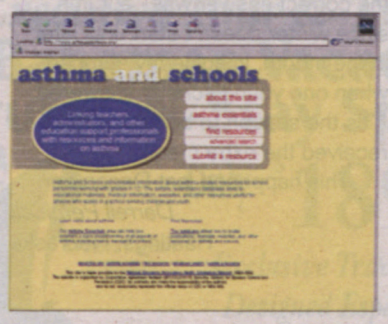
Girl Meets Dog

When a little girl rescues a young shelter dog, the magic begins, in *Morgan the Dog: The Day the Magic Began* by Heather Irbinskas and illustrated by Andra King (29 pages). Morgan is a mixed-breed dog in a shelter, who has nearly lost hope that he'll be adopted: "My legs are long and I have a fluffy white tail. Who would want me?" Brittany looks for a new pet and decides to adopt him after a dramatic rescue from a flooded creek. Morgan rises above his humble background and accomplishes extraordinary things with the help and love of his new owner. This heart-warming story of friendship illustrates to young readers that you don't need to be perfect to be special. The story is made more immediate by being told in the first person, from Morgan's point of view. (hard cover $14.95) www.amazon.com. This book has an accompanying Web site: www.morganthedog.com.

WEB WINNERS

NEA/HIN Launches Asthma Web Site

NEA's Health Information Network has recently launched www.asthmaandschools.org, a Web site linking teachers, administrators, and education support professionals with resources and information on asthma. The site includes a series of



short fact sheets about asthma and how to handle it at school; a searchable database of resources from asthma-oriented organizations; and a glossary of asthma-related terms to better understand asthma.

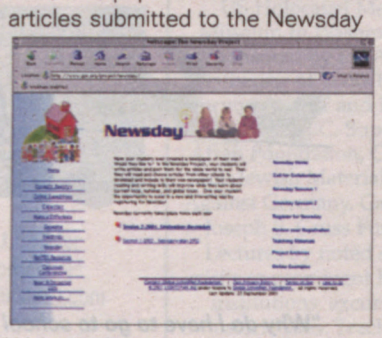
Classics Pages

Www.classicspage.com is a comprehensive Web site about the classics, with over 700 pages of news, information, games, and controversy about the life, literature, art, and archaeology of the ancient world of Greece and Rome—plus an award-winning bookshop. Students can "Ask the Oracle" about all aspects of Greek and Roman literature, mythology, or history. The Oracle will even translate bits of Greek and

Latin that may have you stumped. The site even includes a lengthy list of Latin quotes. A fascinating, extensive site that can be useful for both teachers and students.

Read All About It

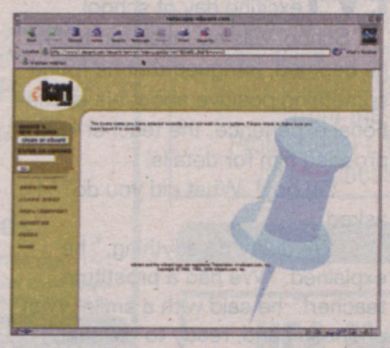
Here's a multi-curricular project in which your students produce their own newspaper based on the news articles submitted to the Newsday



Web site by cooperating student correspondents. Your students become news gatherers and reporters, editors, layout and graphics artists, and publishers. Participation on an international scale leads students to understanding and interpreting broad issues, which transcend local concerns. This project can involve your students in weeks of cross-curricular activity. Go to www.gsn.org/project/newsday.

Get Connected and Communicate

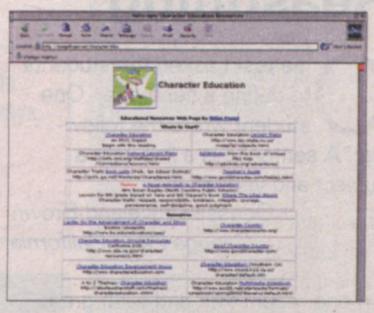
EBoard offers schools an integrated, customized, no advertising version of the easy-to-use eBoard service.



In just days, launch a service that contains no advertising and that matches the look and feel of your school or district's Web site. EBoard makes it easy to post messages, photos, links, and files on the Internet. Homework assignments, class announcements, grading information, and printable permission slips are all at a student's fingertips. Click on "Home" at www2.eboard.com/eboard/servlet/IndexLoginServlet.

All about Character Education

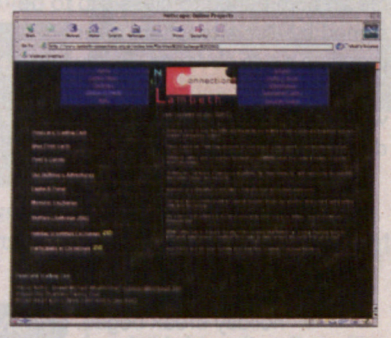
Are you trying to introduce character education at your school? Here's a



comprehensive Web site with an excellent selection of resources, including lesson plans for all levels, a teachers guide, sample character education programs, links to good Web sites, information about emotional intelligence, bullying, terrorism, and an ERIC Digest that discusses the various definitions of and approaches to character education, divergent points of view on character education in schools and much more. Go to midgefrazel.net/character.html.

Looking for the Skittles Challenge

Schools from all over the world are participating in this fun online project that has an unusual combination.



The newly announced project challenges students to use their math skills to predict what color appears most often in a bag of the popular candy Skittles. The data will be compiled and shared with participants daily starting on January 15, 2002. Go to www.lambeth.futureclass.net/projects/default.cfm.

Neuroscience Network For Kids

This fascinating Web site has been created for all students and teachers who would like to learn more about the nervous system. Enjoy the activities and experiments on your way to learning more about the brain and spinal cord. The neuroscience network provides answers from a team of neuroscientists around the world to questions about the nervous system. Be sure to read the questions and answers on file: Where can I get a model of the human brain? (many sources listed.) Do birds have a sense of taste? Go to http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/neurok.html.

in the Light Lane

Line of Reasoning

On a test I asked the students to define a sentence. One student wrote the following: "A sentence is a line with a subject and verb on it."

Odessa Cleveland-Brown
Canoga Park, California

In one recent fifth and sixth grade social studies class, we were discussing explorers and their routes. One insightful student asked me if I thought people in this era of history were smarter than people in recent history or even today. I responded by telling the class that I believed you could place certain individuals in any place in history and they would be smart. One of the examples I used was Einstein. After finishing my example, another student shouted out, "Einstein was real?"

Don Lipinski
Wyandotte, Michigan

In my 40 years of teaching, here is the "excuse" I have never forgotten.

A ninth grade boy presented to me an admittance-to-class slip to be signed by all his teachers after his previous day's absence. Following "Reason for Absence," he had written, "I stayed home in bed all day. Bad horoscope."

Geraldine Pratt
Murray, Utah

We had one more day of school before the big holiday break began. "For tomorrow," I said, right before the dismissal bell, "bring in the first line of a Christmas carol."

The next morning, the students arose and read their first lines. "Silent Night, Holy Night," one began, "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," went the next one and so on. Finally, we got to one seventh grade boy who had been fidgeting and fumbling through computer-generated papers since we began.

"When you said bring the first line of 'A Christmas Carol'," he began, "I wasn't sure if you meant the play or the novel, so I typed in 'Charles Dickens' and looked up both."

Linda Maxwell
Richmond, Kentucky

Here is a little story that happened in one of my students' trumpet lesson.

As an elementary music teacher, I often talk with my band students about proper ways to play their instruments.

I stress posture, breath support, and embouchure in order to get a full tone.

One of my six grade trumpet students was having problems with the sound coming from his instrument. I explained to him that part of the problem may be caused by the old, dented school trumpet he was using, and part of the problem may be his breath. He looked at me with a serious expression and said, "Well... I TRY to brush every day!"

Kari Weness
Bellingham, Minnesota

My kindergarten nephew came home exclaiming about his exciting day of school.

"School was so much fun today!" he beamed. Intrigued that he found something positive about his educational experience, the teacher in me prodded him for details.

"Oh boy! What did you do?" I asked.

"We didn't do anything," he explained. "We had a prostitute teacher!" he said with a smile. With phone in hand, ready to call that school and give them a piece of my mind, I asked him to repeat himself.

"We had a prostitute teacher," he said slowly pronouncing every word carefully. "Our regular teacher wasn't there today, so we had a prostitute teacher instead." I thought a moment, returned the phone to its handle, and explained with a smile, "Not prostitute, honey, SUBSTITUTE!"

Raeshay Duncan
Chesapeake, Virginia

"Why do I have to go to school when I could just go on the 'net?"

In eighth grade earth science class I spent a fair amount of time explaining to my students the cause of the earth's seasons and what dates the seasons changed. Later in the school year, to check the students' power of recall, I asked the following extra credit question on a test: "Today, in Nebraska, what season is it?" The date being December 7th, the correct answer was "autumn," since winter doesn't start until later in the month. Imagine my surprise when one young scholar answered, "'tis the season to be jolly." She received the extra credit.

This happened last December.

Darrell Pernicek
Hastings, Nebraska

Got Laughs?

● Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share with other NEA members? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Fax: 202/822-7206. Send E-mail to neatoday@nea.org.

● Want a classroom chuckle delivered to your E-mail box once a week? Subscribe to the new "In the Light Lane" mailing list. Just send an E-mail to join-lightlane@list.nea.org (no subject or message needed).

All in a Day's Work

During a recent math lesson, my first grade students were examining pennies with magnifying glasses. We examined the "heads" side and they related all the letters they could see and Abraham Lincoln. I told them to turn the penny over and tell me what they see. Most of them started calling out, "I see a house!"

"Ms. Sabo! There's a naked man in the house!" I tried to explain that it was a statue of Abraham Lincoln they were seeing, but all the children were frantically using their magnifying glasses, hoping to see what their classmate had seen. Now, whenever we refer to pennies, someone almost always says, "You mean the one with the naked man on the back?"

Patti Sabo
Bernalillo, New Mexico

One especially personal recollection of my 30+ years teaching occurred about 15 years ago near the beginning of that school year.

Walking my third grade class to lunch, I arrived at the cafeteria along with a class of first graders led by their teacher's aide, holding the hand of a little girl who was at the head of the line. The girl and I exchanged smiles and pleasantries, after which the aide, knowing that I taught older children commented, "She's a wonderful student. Just wait until you have her."

He looked puzzled when I quipped, "Have her? I HAD her!" Until I explained, "She's my daughter."

Anise Harkey
Santa Monica, California

I teach mathematics. Our geometry book starts the year off with proofs.

I began class by saying, "Today we are going to discuss the difference between a theorem and a corollary. Find your thinking caps and put them on!" One student quickly raised his hand.

"How can I help you?" I asked. The student responded, "We are not allowed to wear caps in school!"

Michelle Egr
Schuyler, Nebraska

Marketplace

Adventure Travel

ADVENTURE TRAVEL at NON-PROFIT PRICES — SAVE 20-40%

Two levels of walks each day, beautiful chalet hotels and great cuisine. Canada trips include lodges + camping. Same experienced teacher guides for all trips.

Travel To:
- Switzerland
- England
- Canoe Canada
- Canadian Rockies

CALL TODAY for FREE Brochure

Yankee Travels 603-225-0804 or Commed@concord.k12.nh.us

Or visit our web site at: www.HikingSwitzerland.com

Employment

Walden University
America's Premier Online University™

Part-time faculty to teach distance learning Master's specializations in **Elementary Reading and Literacy** or **Integrating Technology in the Classroom** or **Middle Level Education** Ph.D/Ed.D preferred, Master's degree required. Futher information at:

www.waldon.edu/careers/faculty.html

Anchorage School District, Current openings-educational interpreters, special education and related services. Teachers at all levels in all areas. Nancy at 907/742-4272. Nagarkar_Nancy@Msmail.asd.k12.ak.us.

Instructional Aids

QuizMachine™ Buzzer Systems Many team/player configurations. Affordable, reliable, expandable. 800/294-0494. www.quizco.com.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR 101 — Volumes of Interactive Instruction Online

www.englishgrammar101.com

Part Time Opportunity

Work from home, p/t, f/t. $1,000-$5,000 mth. www.TodaysWealth.com. 800/238-0136. Unlimited income.

Could you use additional income? www.theanswerto.com/upsizing. 800/334-2970.

Professional Development

DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES
Salary Advancement & Recertification

Fort Hays State University
Accredited by North Central Assoc. Colleges & Schools
- Independent Study
- Enroll Anytime
- Use The Internet To Develop Curriculum

Call Toll Free 1-888-687-1727

Professional Services

Thesis problems? Call 800/352-9139. Ralph W. Larkin, Ph.D., or visit www.academicresearchsvc.com

Software

Cheap Software

Popular educational programs from $5, $10, even 99¢. Hugh selection of bargains & closeouts. We take P.O.s. Visit our website and take $10 off an orderof $30 or more. Enter coupon code **10forteachers** 1-800-230-7638

www.SoftwareOutlet.com

Technology

Works4Me — NEA's e-mail classroom tip of the week!

A weekly practical classroom tip from NEA. Visit the helpfrom.nea.org Web site to sign up to receive this free weekly tip via E-mail.

EDUCATORS B & B TRAVEL NETWORK
educators hosting educators since 1986

$32 a night for two
Over 5,000 members

"WE SAVED OVER $750!!"

Ed and Marjorie travelled for 12 days through CA, OR, WA, and into Canada
"It was a fantastic trip with fantastic hosts in fantastic places! What a way to go!"

SEE IT ALL ON OUR WEBSITE!
Travel Diaries, Savings, Membership Directory, and more!

www.educatorstravel.com

Box 5279 - Eugene OR 97405
800-377-3480

China Escorted
All-inclusive Tours
18day Yangtze/8 cities $2475;
15day Historic China $1485.
Spring Getaways too!
888/369-2632

Visit Homesites of L.I. Wilder
3 tours in 2002-free brochures
www.1hsitetours.homestead.com

Europe by Bicycle
Easy paced vacation. Enjoyable, relaxing. Free HBT brochure. 800/852-3258.

Travel

Guaranteed Lowest Available Airfare

Executive Tour & Travel's
Bahamas Vacation Cruise-N-Stay Special

Only $189 *per person double occupancy*

Cruises Depart Everyday

Exclusive Travel Package Designed Especially For

NEA
Members, Families & Friends

Set sail from Ft. Lauderdale to the beautiful Bahamas . . . .

Your Cruise-N-Stay special will include 3 nights deluxe accommodations at one of our Grand Bahama Island Resorts and is a one time offer at this price of $189 per person (based on double occupancy).

Take advantage of this exclusive offer by sending an $89.00 deposit per person by Apr. 30, 2002. Travel dates are good thru Apr., 2003.

Limited Offer . . . . .
Call Now **1-800-272-4707**
Monday thru Friday 9 AM - 8 PM E.T. - Saturday 9 AM - 12 noon E.S.T.

To receive your reservation package, please send $178.00, plus $10.00 S & H ($188.00) PER COUPLE TO: (Check, Money Order or Credit Card).

Executive Tour & Travel Services, Inc.
301 Indigo Drive • Daytona Beach, FL 32114

NEA — ACCT # JK 14460-006

30 Day Advance Notice Required

Price Includes Cruise, Meals on Board Ship To and From Bahamas, 3 Nights Accommodations, Port Charges and Service Fees. (Hotel Tax and Departure Tax NOT Included.) **High Season (November 15 to April 15) $25.00 per night per room additional.*

Executive Tour & Travel Services is registered in the State of Florida as a Seller of Travel. State Registration No. 22752

Maui Hawaii-Ocean Front deluxe condo, 2bdrm, bths, amenities. 2002-03 booking. 734/528-2163.

Learn Spanish in Spain or Latin America. Homestays. Credit available. 714/731-5924. PenTimmons@aol.com.

Travel/Study

SEMINAR ON HOLOCAUST AND JEWISH RESISTANCE

Three week overseas program for high school teachers able to implement Holocaust studies in their classrooms July 2-24. Includes Poland, Israel and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum In Washington DC. Sponsored by the American Gathering of Jewis Holocaust Survivors, AFT and Educators' Chapter of JLC. Supported by Atran Foundation, Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Caroline and Joseph S. Gruss Funds, Inc. Lectures by noted scholars, visits to prominent Holocaust institutions, excursions to historic sites. Teachers pay $2,000, covers air travel from New York, hotels, two to a room, two meals a day, some trips.

For Application, write:
Jewish Labor Committee
25 East 21st Street
New York, NY 10010
Tel: 212/477-0707
Applications due April 15.

Spanish for educators and HSS in Guatemala. Homestays. Univercity credits. www.casaxelaju.com

Videos & CD-ROMs

Curious about peer review?

Want to know how brain research can improve your teaching? Looking for effective discipline strategies? Try School Stories from the Professional Library. nea.org/books.

To place a Marketplace advertisement...

Just send in your notice, with appropriate payment, to NEA Today Marketplace at the address below.

Rates:
$120 per line; 3 line minimum: Please count 30 characters per line including space and punctuation. Display ads: $800 per column inch. 1/10 page $3,745; 1/5 page $7,085. Deduct 10% if you're an NEA member.

Contact:
NEA Today Marketplace
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/822-7260.

Web Sites

associationspecialties.com
School and Association Wearables
888/444-4280.

Don't forget to visit the NEA Member Benefits Web Site.

Log onto www.neamb.com and discover the power of information at your fingertips. All the latest NEA Member Benefits information is just a click away. You can access program updates, current rates, special offers and announcements, Web Site highlights-and more!

Web Giveaway

NEA Member Benefits Web Site Gift Card Giveaway!

Shop Target at the Mall or at Home with a $100 Gift Card!

1) Register in the "Members-Only" area at www.neamb.com between 03/01/02-03/31/02.
2) Click on "Gift Card Giveaway".
3) Cross your fingers!

nea Member Benefits

SWEET

4.21% APY*

(24-month CD term valid 1/7/02-1/13/02)

SWEETER

The NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD offers members generous yields that have been among the top 1% in the nation.†

NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD
4.21% APY*
(24-month term)

NEA yield shown is valid only between 1/7/02 and 1/13/02, and is subject to change weekly. Other banks' yields are valid 1/3/02 and are shown for comparison purposes only.

As an NEA member, you can make your hard-earned money work harder for you. Open an NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate® CD, offered by MBNA America Bank, with as little as $1,000 – and earn yields that have *consistently beaten most of the banks around the nation.*

Not only will you be able to lock in a high interest rate, you can rest easy knowing that your savings are FDIC-insured for up to $100,000 per depositor. You can choose from flexible terms too, ranging from 6 to 60 months. It's also a great way to save for retirement as a Traditional or Roth IRA.

World Savings, CA
3.21% APY**
(24-month CD term)

Bank One, IL
2.15% APY**
(24-month CD term)

Chase Bank, TX
1.60% APY**
(24-month CD term)

Call MBNA at **1-800-457-2258** and mention **priority code JAO3X** for current rates – or to open an account for you or a member of your family.Δ Because this is one sweet deal you won't want to pass up!

Call MBNA at 1-800-457-2258, priority code JA03X.
Or visit www.neamb.com

MBNA AMERICA

nea Member Benefits
www.neamb.com

MEMBER FDIC

NEA YIELD SHOWN IS VALID ONLY BETWEEN 1/7/02 AND 1/13/02, AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WEEKLY. OTHER BANKS' YIELDS ARE VALID 1/3/02 AND ARE SHOWN FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES ONLY. PLEASE CALL MBNA FOR CURRENT NEA-SPONSORED GOLDCERTIFICATE CD RATES OR VISIT WWW.NEAMB.COM

† In weekly surveys published by *The Bank Rate Monitor*, MBNA has consistently ranked among the top 1% of more than 8,000 banks nationwide.

* Annual Percentage Yield (APY) for the NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD is valid from 1/7/02 through 1/13/02, based on a $1,000 minimum opening deposit, a term of 24 months, and assumes that interest remains in the account until maturity. Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal of CD principal. Withdrawals and fees may reduce earnings.

** All other bank APYs shown are valid as of 1/3/02, based on a $2,500 minimum opening deposit and a term of 24 months. Source – *Informa Research Services*, 1/3/02.

Δ Eligible NEA family members include parents, spouse (or domestic partner) and children.

The NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD has been developed for NEA members and their families only. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates through the NEA-Sponsored GoldCertificate CD. If eligible, a replacement account will be offered.

Absolutely NO membership dues are used to market this program.

This certificate of deposit is offered through MBNA America Bank, N.A. FDIC-Insured up to $100,000 per depositor. Member FDIC. MBNA, MBNA America, and GoldCertificate are federally registered service marks of MBNA America Bank, N.A.

©2002 MBNA America Bank, N.A.

CDNT0302